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MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER IX.

CARWESTON.

IN hours of reflection afterwards, Dick was sorry that he had betrayed himself to Randal Hawke. But after all it did not seem to matter much. Randal was so seldom there, and had plenty to interest him without interfering in Dick's affairs. He had received his old acquaintance very kindly, considering the cool terms that they were on years ago. Altogether Dick felt justified in putting Randal out of his head.

For some days after this he haunted Flora with a persistency that sometimes seemed to worry her a little, though by degrees she resigned herself, and let him be as tame as he pleased. It was the old story over again. Dick following her about everywhere, in expeditions to Morebay, in country walks, meeting her in the streets, paying her constant visits at home. People talked, and their talk soon reached Miss Northcote. But her eyes and ears had been open enough all along, and she was not surprised, and only sorry that she had given Dick credit for better things. Her manner to him grew insensibly colder. Dick, like a sulky boy, said nothing, but walked off to Rose Cottage for consolation.

One morning Miss Northcote was going down a lane towards Fore-street, when she saw these two coming up together. They were talking rather earnestly, and did not see her till she was close upon them. Then she heard Flora say to Dick, in a quick undertone, 'Here is your aunt. You must go with her.'

'Not I,' was Dick's answer.

Miss Northcote felt a great deal of disgust and anger. She walked on with a perfectly grave face, and was passing them with a slight bow, when Mrs. Lancaster stopped and spoke.

'Miss Northcote, I hope you don't think that I am taking your nephew away from you? He is very unmanageable. I can't make him see his duty.'

Dick was going to join in with some sort of joke against himself, but looked at his aunt and held his tongue. Nobody could speak good-humouredly in the presence of that look of scorn, which curled Miss Northcote's lip and slightly elevated her dark brows.

'I can only wish my nephew to please himself, Mrs. Lancaster, thank you,' she answered; and had passed on before Flora could reply.

'You are very stupid,' she said to Dick. 'You are making your relations angry, and all for nothing.'

'I will be sure that it is for nothing before I trouble myself about that,' said Dick. 'Thank goodness, I am not responsible to any of them.'

'I care about it, if you don't,' said Flora rather sadly. 'I should like to explain to Miss Northcote that all this is no doing of mine. She does not understand, and I can't wonder at her being vexed.'

'O, she has a temper,' said Dick; 'but she is the best creature in the world, and will get over it all right, if you let her alone. I'll settle it with her one of these days.'

That afternoon Miss Northcote ordered her pony-carriage, and drove away through the lanes to Carweston. Long before she reached it they became very narrow, with high banks covered with fern and wild flowers; here and there a gate gave a view of lovely varied slopes, the Mora, and the hills beyond. It was almost an adventure to drive down the last lane, between high walls of rock covered all over with soft green lichen where the ferns did not grow; here every kind to be found in that country had a niche to itself in the ragged edges and clefts of the rocks. Bright sprays of wild strawberries looked out amongst them, and the great clustering leaves of the primroses made one think of spring. Down the side of the lane a tiny stream went trickling over the pebbles; the larger ferns drooped over it, with leaves as well as roots drinking it in. Between one wall and the other there was only just room for the carriage-wheels.

This romantic lane was not the only approach to Carweston; at the further end it opened on a wide road, leading straight into the village. But the short cut through the lanes was much more used by

the St. Denys people, except by the more nervous of them, to whom the idea of meeting anything in these lanes was a terror.

The low gray church-tower and the few stone houses of Carweston stood at the head of a wide valley, down which a trout-stream ran to join the Mora. The broad slopes of the valley lay smiling in the sun; there were cornfields, and hayfields where they were carrying; orchards full of fruit, strawberry-gardens that scented the air. A steamer and two or three small boats were passing swiftly on the calm expanse of the river; beyond lay the moors and hills in a warm purple mist. It did Kate Northcote good, as she looked at it all, and even suggested this, quite without any concurrence of hers—if there was so much good in everything, might there not be a little in Mrs. Lancaster?

'No,' said Kate; 'horrid scheming woman! She has been spinning her webs for Dick all this time, and has caught him, poor silly fellow. I can't bear to think of it.'

A little way beyond the church, a wall hung with masses of ivy skirted the garden of Carweston House. Then there were two square pillars, with a gate between them, and a solemn dragon sitting upright on each. One of them had lost his paws, and was a piteous sight; but some kind sprays of ivy were running up to offer themselves as a screen. Facing this gate stood the solid old house, built of great blocks of stone, which as the years passed over them had taken all manner of colours. The house was low and large, and the ivy had all its own way with one side; on the other a great-flowered magnolia and a crimson rose climbed up in beautiful rivalry.

Miss Northcote crossed the

large furnished hall, where all the brown old pictures hanging round looked down on her as a friend, and where she had often sat listening to Anthony, as he played on his organ at the further end. The drawing-room, into which she went, was one of those rooms that one loves at first sight, feeling that they could never be anything but homelike. It was low and large and almost square; the crimson carpet was a little worn, the furniture was old-fashioned, and the walls were covered with pictures. At one end there was a group of musical instruments—a piano, a harp, a violoncello in its case. It was not till one had been in the room some minutes that one realised how full it was of beautiful things; they did not obtrude themselves, but seemed to belong to the place. Every ornament was good and curious: the old gilded clock in the corner was a real Louis Quatorze; the pieces of Dresden and Chelsea china stood quietly here and there, as if they had no idea of their own value, no ambition of velvet mounts or glass cases, but were too happy to attend on Mrs. Strange, and to be broken in her service, if the Fates would have it so. But the jewels of the room were three old Italian devotional pictures, which hung together near the piano at the end. One of them, an Annunciation, Anthony always declared to be a Fra Angelico, though he had no satisfactory proof of it. He said that no other mortal man could have painted the face of that angel; it must have been given in answer to the prayers of a saint.

Mrs. Strange was generally to be found in her drawing-room. She was there when Kate came in, and met her with eager welcoming hands. Kate kissed her old friend, and sat down by her on

a large soft sofa near the fireplace.

Mrs. Strange was a small slender old woman, with delicate features, and bright eyes full of expression. She had known Kate Northcote all her life, and was very fond of her. After they had been talking for a few minutes she laid her hand on hers, and said,

'What is it, Kate? You are in some trouble, I can see. I hope you came to tell me all about it.'

'Yes, I did,' said Kate, the tears rushing into her eyes. 'Not that any one can help me, dear Mrs. Strange—not even you. It is about Dick.'

'I like Dick,' said Mrs. Strange. 'He is one of my boys. I won't hear that he has done anything wrong. But I love you better still; so tell me.'

'Well—it is that Mrs. Lancaster,' said Kate. At the obnoxious name the colour rose in her cheeks, and all the anger that had half faded away came back again. 'He is flirting with her again, just as he did before; but it is much worse now. I don't know how to save him now.'

'O Dick, for shame!' said Mrs. Strange. 'Is it want of amusement? I was a flirt myself, you know, once, and I quite remember the feeling. Send him to me to be scolded. It is a cruel thing. I thought he had too much heart for it. When he was a boy, of course, he fancied himself in love; but it can't be that now.'

'But I am afraid it is.'

'No, my dear, I don't think so,' said Mrs. Strange decidedly. 'Dick has too much sense to fall really in love out of his own station. No; he is behaving very badly. The poor thing is a widow, which makes it worse. It is simply for amusement.'

Kate shook her head.

'I don't think you need pity her: she is quite able to take care of herself. No, it is not mere flirting on Dick's part. He is unhappy and disturbed in mind. He either is, or thinks himself, in love. Of course if she can marry him, she will.'

'And if Dick has led her to expect it, he can't draw back without dishonour,' said Mrs. Strange, half to herself.

'O, you don't know what you are saying!' cried Kate, in great distress.

'Kate, I know that if all men and women were bound by one high sense of honour, there would be no foolish flirtations, no disappointments, no broken hearts, none of the sad stories that one hears every day. Very few people think of it nowadays, but I used to be taught that a lady or a gentleman never raised false hopes—if they did, they held themselves bound to fulfil them. I was a flirt once—for of course I thought these notions exaggerated—and I had very good reason to repent.'

'But, dear Mrs. Strange, Dick may have done wrong, but I can't give him up to that. If he marries this woman, it must be against my will,' exclaimed Kate. 'It would be a terrible thing for us all; and what would it be for him, poor boy, when he woke from his dream? No! I must break through it if I can.'

'Lecture Dick as much as you please,' said Mrs. Strange. 'If he still has room to draw back, by all means let him do it. But if his honour is engaged in the affair, he had better carry it through than give that up. If it was my own son I should say the same. I am very sorry for you, Kate.'

So they went on talking; Kate Northcote trying to persuade her-

self that Mrs. Strange's ideas were far too exalted for this world, and yet knowing all the time, in the nobleness of her own nature, that her old friend was right.

'Here is Anthony coming through the garden,' said Mrs. Strange, after a time. 'We have talked about this enough for the present. You must not let it weigh on your mind too much. Only have it out with Dick as pleasantly as you can.'

'It was a pity that he ever came home,' said Kate despondingly.

'Not at all. He might have got into scrapes out there. Don't be anxious. He won't be far wrong in the end, if he only keeps on the straight road and in the daylight.'

Anthony came in hot and tired from walking; but his first anxiety was to show Miss Northcote some stone knives that had been found in a quarry near Carweston.

'How are they at Pensand?' said his mother, after he had talked about these for some minutes. 'At least, how is the poor little prisoner, for I care about nobody else?'

'Miss Ashley?' said Kate, rather surprised, and looking from Mrs. Strange to Anthony.

He had just dropped into an armchair, with his long legs stretched out and his arms folded. He made an odd face and shook his head.

'I shall have to run away with her. I must carry her off one of these days. It is unbearable. She talks to me; she tells me that she is moped to death. "My blessed child," said I to her, "had I but wings, I'd take you for a long flight where no guardian could dream of overtaking us. We would hover over Pensand a few minutes, for the sake of the bird's-eye view, and then away to

the West." "That would be too delightful," said she, and there was a tear under the smile.

'But that was naughty of you,' said Mrs. Strange. 'You only make her more restless and discontented.'

'Perhaps so. But I never will acquiesce in tyranny. To me there is nothing more terrible than the content of a slave. A prisoner who does not wish for freedom—ah, that is a depth indeed.'

'Does he startle you, Kate?' said Mrs. Strange.

'Not by saying that. I quite feel the same. But when I was at Pensand, Miss Ashley seemed so very happy, on such good terms with the General. I have not seen her since. I'm afraid I have not thought about her much. She interests you, then, Anthony?'

'A butterfly struggling from the chrysalis,' said Anthony, in a low voice. 'A child still, that would be happy and adventurous like other children; if it could. A mind clear from suspicion, a heart full of faith in its fellow-creatures, and love for them, who have never fed it on anything but husks. Has that an uninteresting sound?'

'No, indeed. Is she all that, poor girl? And is she so very dull at Pensand?'

'She is alone. She knows every yard inside the gates, and the General forbids her to go outside them. He tells me she is shy, and does not wish to make acquaintance. Poor Queen Mab!'

'What can be the General's reason, I wonder?' said Miss Northcote. 'Has Randal been there much? Dick met him in the village not long ago.'

'Randal!' said Anthony, suddenly springing out of his chair. As he stood before Kate, drawing himself up to his full height, she

could not help looking at him with something like admiration. His face, his whole bearing, seemed on fire with enthusiastic indignation. 'Do you mean it, Kate? Do you think the old General could be such a scoundrel? Randal! She has only seen him once; but she dislikes him, she shrinks from him; and no wonder. If I thought that any such diabolical plot existed—'

'Patience, my dear Anthony,' said Mrs. Strange.

'No more patience for me, mother, in such a case as that.'

'What makes you dislike Randal so much?' said Kate. She was afraid she thought it only too likely that General Hawke meant the heiress for his son. 'Is there any harm in him?'

'Harm! I hate him,' said Anthony.

'Rector, it is a good thing that your people can't hear you,' said Mrs. Strange.

'Mother, the whole parish knows, I hope, that I hate raciality. Harm in Randal, Kate? There is nothing that I could lay to his charge in so many words, except being an insolent snob. But don't men's faces tell you their characters? Did you ever like Randal?'

'Never very much. Though I must confess that I always thought him good-looking. But I have not seen him for some time.'

'You never liked him; that is enough,' said Anthony, who was gradually coming down into his natural manner. 'My mother never liked him. What is to be said for a man, when two good women and a young girl are taught by their own heaven-born instinct to dislike him?'

He threw himself back in his chair again, leaned his head on his hand, and seemed deep in thought, from which he was roused a few

minutes later by his mother's voice.

'Anthony, give Kate her tea. And go and get some flowers for her.'

Mrs. Strange always ruled the talk in her own house, and never allowed a disagreeable subject to go on long. She made both Kate and Anthony understand that she would have no more at present of their respective grievances. They must make themselves agreeable; and so they did, both loving her dearly, and thinking her the wisest and best woman in the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE BRACELET.

MISS NORTHCOTE was not able that day to have it out with Dick, for she hardly saw him after she got home. He went to dine with some people at Morebay, and was to stay all night, and go with them the next day to a cricket-match. Thus his aunt had plenty of time for making up her mind what she would say to him.

That next day was Saturday. Captain Cardew came home early from the dockyard, and, having enjoyed his after-dinner nap in the parlour, joined his wife and daughter in the drawing-room. Something had been brewing in the Captain's head for several days, and he thought it would be as well to clear the air before Sunday. Thinking Flora quite old enough to manage her own affairs, he had said nothing to his wife in private, and Mrs. Cardew, though she had seen for several days that he was put out, had not asked him why. The Captain generally smoked away his whims in time.

He came into the room, and

found his wife working in the window, and Flora reading a letter, which she folded up and put into her pocket as he entered.

'Is that from Dick Northcote? Can't he go away for a day without writing to you?' said Captain Cardew.

'No. From one of my friends,' answered Flora, a shade of annoyance crossing her fair face.

She had always been independent at home, but since she came back a widow her parents had been made to understand that all her affairs, her friendships, her correspondence, were completely her own. They thought this the right thing, and seldom interfered with her in any way; it was a singularly peaceful household.

'I'm glad to hear it,' said the Captain. 'Stay where you are, Flora,' as she was slowly rising from her chair. 'I want to speak to you.'

'Well?' said Flora, sitting down again.

Captain Cardew began walking up and down the room. Flora glanced at her mother with elevated eyebrows. Mrs. Cardew shook her head violently, to show her perfect ignorance of what might be the matter.

'Did you say you wished to speak to me?' said Flora, after waiting a few moments.

'Yes,' said the Captain. 'I have a question to ask. What is to be the end of all this nonsense between you and young Northcote?'

'What an odd question, father! I hardly know how to answer it. But I suppose all nonsense comes to the same end,' said Flora, smiling a little.

'You think, then, that he is only playing with you. And do you suppose that I am going to put up with that?'

'I don't exactly mean that.

You had better not distress yourself. I can settle it.'

'No. That is just the sort of thing I don't mean to stand. Though you are Mrs. Lancaster you are under your father's roof, and I tell you I will not have these doings, unless there is some good reason for them. I shall speak to the fellow myself, and find out what his intentions really are.'

'For goodness' sake, don't do that!' said Flora.

'I shall, though. I suppose you think your chance won't be improved by being taken up by your old father. I shall speak in a louder voice than—than General Hawke would, I daresay, and maybe use some rough words.'

'O Captain, do hold your tongue! You're making Flora quite ill!' exclaimed Mrs. Cardew, jumping up and hurrying to her daughter.

Flora had flushed crimson, and made a little start, as if she meant to run out of the room. But then she paused and lay back, closing her eyes, as if there was nothing for it but to hear her father to the end.

'A couple of geese!' said the Captain angrily to himself. 'Sit down,' to his wife; 'there is nothing the matter with her, and I have not done yet. Listen to a few words of sense, Flora, if you can.'

Flora opened her eyes, and bent her head.

'You don't seem to take it in,' said the Captain, 'but it is a very awkward thing for you to be run after by a fellow like that. It was a different thing when he was a schoolboy. I tell you, unless I am convinced that something is to come of it, I won't have it at all. I'll let him know that he must behave to you as he would to a lady of his own rank.'

'Dear me! So he does. I am quite able to take care of myself, I assure you,' said Flora. 'Pray leave me to settle it.'

'Then you are quite sure that he means to marry you?' said the Captain fiercely.

'If he has the chance, I suppose he does. I don't know, really, father. I wish you would not make such a fuss about nothing.'

'Nothing!' repeated the Captain. 'I don't consider it nothing. It is not nothing, and so Mr. Dick Northcote shall find. You are a great fool for having encouraged him at all, but you must have somebody dangling after you. I thought you had had enough of these gentlemen. You would not get on with his relations any more than with poor Lancaster's. Worse, for people down here are three times as proud. I don't believe they would acknowledge you at all. Miss Northcote bowed to me the other day, but as coldly as if she wasn't quite sure who I was. If you like that sort of thing, I don't. Nor does your mother, good-natured as she is.'

'Well,' said Flora, with a sigh, 'what do you want me to do?'

Before the Captain had answered this question, which seemed to puzzle him a little, there was a ring, Dick's ring, as Flora knew very well. She smiled rather oddly, and glanced at her mother. Would her father attack him on the spot? She hardly thought so, in spite of all his talk. But after a minute's delay the maid came in and brought her a small parcel.

'Mr. Northcote left it for you, ma'am,' she said.

Flora held it in her hand for a minute and looked at it. It was smartly done up in white paper, with her name on it in Dick's untidy straggling hand, and his initials, 'R. N.', in the corner.

'Goodness!' said Mrs. Cardew,

under her breath, 'it looks like wedding-cake.'

'Well, are you going to open it?' said the Captain.

Flora opened it, and there appeared a dark-red leather case, which in its turn revealed a very pretty gold bracelet set with turquoises. In Flora's face, as she looked, were both dismay and amusement.

'How could he be so silly?' she said, half to herself.

But the amusement fled when she looked at her father. He walked up to her, took the case out of her hand, and shut it with a sounding snap, just as Mrs. Cardew was bursting into admiration.

'Answer me two questions, Flora,' he said. 'Are you engaged to young Northcote?'

'No, father, of course not.'

'Are you sure that you ever will be?'

'No.'

'You accept no presents from him till you are. Is this the first?'

'Yes. What are you going to do with it?'

'I am going after him with it—this moment. I mean him to know what I think. So you may say good-bye to your bracelet. Leave it there. I'm going to put my other coat on.'

Mrs. Cardew listened with horrified eyes, Flora without remark or remonstrance.

'My darling child,' said the mother, when Captain Cardew had left the room, 'I can't think what makes your father so violent. Are you very much vexed, dear? Will poor Dick be angry?'

'I daresay he will,' said Flora. 'Yes, I'm vexed too; I detest explosions. I could have managed it all so quietly myself.'

'Of course there can't be a doubt about him,' said Mrs. Cardew. 'I do call it nonsense. Why,

he worships the very ground you walk on.'

'If he does, it is all the more unpleasant that he should be bullied into saying so,' said Flora.

'To be sure, dear. But it's no use talking to your father. Men are so stupid, when once they take a thing into their heads. Dear me, how I should have liked to see you in that bracelet! Just try it on. What good taste he has?'

'No, mother, let it alone,' said Flora.

Dick, meanwhile, after leaving his precious parcel, had not gone home, but away for a walk into the country. He was inclined to put off facing his aunt as long as possible. So it happened that Captain Cardew, arriving very red and bristling at Miss Northcote's house, was shown into the drawing-room, where she was sitting alone. She was very much surprised to see her visitor, and perhaps looked so. The Captain made her a low bow.

'I beg your pardon, ma'am,' he said. 'There is some mistake. I called to see your nephew.'

'He is not come in yet, but I expect him soon,' said Kate. 'Will you sit down and wait for him, Captain Cardew? or can I give him any message?'

Upon this, Captain Cardew dived into his pocket for poor Dick's parcel, roughly folded up again, and presented it to her with another bow.

'What is it?' said Kate, holding it and looking at it doubtfully.

'It is a bracelet,' said the Captain rather hoarsely.

'A bracelet,' she said, with a strong inclination to smile. 'Am I to give it to my nephew?'

'If you will take the trouble to read what is written on that paper, you will see that it is addressed by Mr. Northcote to my daughter,'

answered the Captain, with extreme politeness.

'O!' said Kate. She began to see how things were tending. Laying the parcel on the table, she looked Captain Cardew straight in the face. When one pair of honest eyes meets another, there need not be many round-about ways between them. 'Pray sit down, and make me understand all about this,' she said frankly.

'I have nothing to say that will please you, Miss Northcote,' said the old sailor, but he obeyed her and sat down.

The presence of a lady was curiously taming; his wife and daughter would hardly have known him again. But he was not awkward, for the good breeding that the sea gives her sons never deserted him. Kate, not knowing what was before her, was the more uneasy of the two. There was a flush of excitement in her cheeks, and her heart was beating very fast; what had Dick been doing?

'Mr. Northcote left that parcel at my door twenty minutes ago,' said Captain Cardew. 'But I have to say to him that as long as he is not openly engaged to my daughter, she will accept no presents from him. I'm sorry to mention the words, ma'am, for I know they must annoy you. But it seems as if that was what he meant.'

'You think so?' said Kate, and she sighed.

'I like the young fellow,' the Captain went on, warming to his subject. 'I think it is a pity that he should be so soft. People ought to marry in their own rank of life. My daughter has married out of hers once, and I suppose she may be inclined to do so again, though the first was none too pleasant. I tell her she will repent; but young people are wil-

ful. You knew about all this, ma'am?

'Of course, I could not help knowing something of it,' said Kate. 'But Dick has said nothing to me, and I did not know it had gone so far.'

'It's a great annoyance to you, of course,' said the Captain.

'I can't pretend to be pleased,' she answered quietly.

'Well, I came here to tell young Mr. Northcote that I would have no more shilly-shallying. Either he engages himself to my daughter, or he gives her up at once, and we see the last of this dawdling about together. It is not respectable, I say, and though she is a widow, I suppose she is still my child. Now will you let an old fellow give you a word of advice?'

'Go on, please, Captain Cardew,' said Kate, bowing her head.

'You don't want this affair to go any further. Neither do I. There is no good in it for either of them. When you speak to your nephew about it, tell him that his wisest course will be to sheer off altogether. Then he'll please Flora's relations and his own.'

Kate sat silent for a minute or two, considering.

'Thank you,' she said at last. 'It is very good of you to say that. But I don't know that a thing like this can be settled so easily. What would Mrs. Lancaster think of him, if, after going so far, he was to sheer off suddenly?'

She smiled a little, and looked at the Captain.

'Disagreeable for both sides, of course,' said he. 'But people who flirt must take the consequences. Better for Flora to be disappointed now than afterwards. She has a spirit of her own, and it would hurt her, Miss Northcote, if you were to take no notice of her. I

told her that was what she would have to expect. Ladies like you are proud, you see.'

'Proud! Well, perhaps I am,' said Kate, 'but in a different sense from yours. Much too proud, Captain Cardew, to wish my nephew to behave dishonourably to your daughter, if he has led her to think that he is really attached to her.'

The Captain stared, and made no answer. After a moment's pause Kate went on, speaking with an effort, but very earnestly.

'And too proud to insult Dick by refusing to acknowledge his wife. That would be a great cruelty, a great wrong, both to him and her and myself. You may be quite easy about that.'

'I beg your pardon, ma'am, for expecting anything else,' said the Captain, getting up and bowing. 'You have shown me what a true lady is. Good-evening to you.'

'I will talk to Dick when he comes in,' said Miss Northcote, 'and he shall do what he wishes and thinks right. In the mean while, won't you take the bracelet back? It will vex him to see it here.'

'Thank you, I won't,' said the Captain. 'I don't care if he is vexed. People have to be brought to their senses.'

'Very well, as you please,' said Kate.

As he turned to leave the room she held out her hand to him with a smile. He took the tips of her fingers, held them for an instant, and dropped them with another bow. Then he went out, in a much better temper, leaving the bone of contention, represented by Dick's unfortunate parcel, on Miss Northcote's table.

Dick came in presently, and sat down in his favourite place by the window. His aunt went up to him, and laid her hand on his shoulder.

'My Dick, I want you to behave like a man.'

'Who says I don't?' asked Dick, in a rather antagonistic way. 'Now I'm going to catch it,' he thought; yet his aunt's face and manner were so reassuringly gentle as to puzzle him.

'Like a gentleman, perhaps, I ought to say,' said Kate. 'I want you to be open with me, and to tell me all about—Mrs. Lancaster. How long is it since you found you couldn't trust me?'

A minute or two of dead silence. Dick sat staring out of the window.

'Hang it!' he said. 'I'm in such an awful fix. I thought you would never bear to hear of it. You would laugh; no, you'd be desperately cross, for it is no laughing matter.'

'I shall neither laugh nor be cross. Perhaps I know as much as you can tell me—except what the fix is—for it all seems to me plain sailing enough.'

'I'm a fool, you know,' said Dick.

'Suppose we grant that. I don't want to hear about foolishness. What is it that you seriously mean to do?'

'Aunt Kate, you are too hard on a fellow.'

'Don't be weak. I am prepared to hear that you are engaged to Flora Lancaster. Am I right?'

'Not quite that.'

'Ought you to be?'

'What on earth do you mean? You don't think I ought.'

'I have something to tell you,' said Kate; and standing there she told him of Captain Cardew's visit, of the returned bracelet, of what the Captain had said, and what she had said to him. 'I will hide nothing from you,' she said. 'You know enough of the world to judge for yourself. I should like to know what your feeling is

with regard to her; what you mean to do.'

Kate emphasised her speech now and then by a little pressure of Dick's shoulder. There was some uncertainty in her voice, and she found it difficult to remember that she was not talking to a schoolboy.

'Well, now,' said Dick suddenly, 'you understand the awful fix I'm in—or was in till you said all that. I thought you hated the very idea so thoroughly, that I didn't like to breathe it to you; and all the while I kept on getting deeper and deeper in. I hate rows, and I thought there would be such a row if I asked her. I thought you would shut your doors on me, perhaps cut me off with a shilling. And you don't mind it after all! You are a brick!'

'Then what did you mean to do? How did you expect it to end?'

'I don't know,' said Dick. 'I enjoyed to-day, and didn't think about to-morrow. Fancy the old Captain turning crusty like that!'

'He was quite right. Does Mrs. Lancaster share your happy indifference to to-morrow?'

'Pretty well, I think. Generally,' said Dick, becoming a little doubtful, as he remembered some irritable moments of Flora's, some clouds athwart the smiles.

'I hardly believe that,' said Miss Northcote. 'Now tell me—if any friend of yours was in the same case, had paid Mrs. Lancaster all the attention you have paid her, had said the same things to her, would you think him justified in drawing back now and going no further?'

'As you ask me, I can't say that I should.'

'Then take the same rule for yourself,' said Miss Northcote sadly. 'I don't know whether you

really care for her, or whether it is only a fancy for a pretty face. At any rate, after all I have heard, I think you are bound to ask her. Does she care for you?'

'I don't know,' said Dick. 'I'm not sure. I hope she does, for the more I'm with her the more charming I think her. She was my fate, you see. But you—won't you hate it horribly?'

'We won't enter into that. I'll behave as well as I can.'

'O, bother! If it makes you miserable—' said Dick penitently.

'My dear old fellow, I can't be miserable, as long as I feel that you are doing right,' said Kate, with a great deal of feeling in her voice. She bent over Dick and kissed him on the forehead. Then she went away to her own room, and what she did there can be best imagined by a mother whose son has disappointed her.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE COMBE.

DICK went about whistling the next day as if a load had been taken off his shoulders. He did not try his aunt's generosity by talking of Flora, but was at his very best and pleasantest all the morning. Though she could not be sorry for the change, it made her a little sadder; that her dear boy should be so thrown away was indeed a trial hard to bear.

It was Sunday, and the whole Cardew party were at church in the morning. Dick made no attempt to join them in walking up the hill. Miss Northcote could not help noticing that Mrs. Lancaster looked pale and depressed, and wondered what the reason of this might be, but did not say anything to Dick about it. She guessed that he would go to Rose

Cottage in the afternoon, and that his fate would be settled before night.

About four o'clock Dick came into the drawing-room, where his aunt was reading, and, after fidgeting about for a few minutes, suddenly spoke.

'Look here, aunt Kate, I want to thank you. You're behaving nobly.'

He paused, with a nervous laugh.

'Never mind; don't talk about it,' said Kate, as cheerfully as she could.

'I know you think it a fearful sacrifice,' Dick went on. 'But you'll change your mind before long. You'll find that Flora is as good as—'

'As she is lovely. Very well. I hope so. And I hope, dear Dick, that she won't find she has made an equally fearful sacrifice. Everybody might not enjoy life in the colonies, even with you. Now get along, and don't provoke me any more.'

'O, it's no use talking to you,' said Dick, half inclined to be angry at being laughed at.

It certainly was hard to have the expression of his finest feelings nipped in the bud. He really was grateful to his aunt, and wanted to tell her so. But Kate was only human after all, and could not yet bear to enter into Flora's praises. The idea of Dick's sacrifice, too, coming from himself, was almost too funny. Martyrs of that kind did not generally go smiling and whistling to the stake, Kate thought.

Dick walked away to Rose Cottage, at first not quite so cheerful. But he had recovered his spirits by the time he got there. The maid dashed cold water upon him by answering 'No' to his inquiry whether Mrs. Lancaster was at home.

'Not at home! Are you sure?' said Dick incredulously.

Mrs. Cardew just then looked out of the parlour, and, seeing him, came forward to the door. She was blushing and smiling, and very nervous. Her agitation had the contrary effect on Dick, fortunately, and he shook hands with her in quite a cool every-day fashion.

'Mrs. Lancaster is out?' he said, in a louder voice than usual, the idea having just dawned on him that Captain Cardew meant to forbid him the house, and that Flora might be locked up somewhere.

'The old donkey! Does he think I shall stand that?' thought Dick, and he looked rather fiercely at poor unoffending Mrs. Cardew.

'Well, yes, she is out,' said she anxiously. 'But won't you come in, Mr. Northcote?'

'No, I won't, thank you,' said Dick. 'Perhaps she is gone to church somewhere?'

'No. We have no afternoon service, you see.'

Dick's brow had clouded over a good deal; he hated small obstacles and contradictions. Flora's mother grew rather frightened as she looked at him.

'I don't suppose, Mr. Northcote,' she began timidly, 'that Flora would mind my telling you where she is. She took a book—she was restless in the house, poor dear—and I believe she went down to the Combe. She might not like to be interrupted by everybody, but surely she couldn't mind you.'

'I hope not. Thank you, Mrs. Cardew,' said Dick. His face cleared up at once, and he was turning away, when she stepped out into the garden after him.

'You must excuse my mentioning it,' she said, 'and Flora would be angry; but I have known you

so long, Mr. Dick, haven't I! Now I do hope you're not vexed at what the Captain did yesterday; he is so headstrong, you know, and he meant it for the best. We have had so many anxieties about Flora, and when it is one's only child, one can't help fretting.'

'The Captain was quite right,' said Dick. He coloured scarlet, but smiled very pleasantly at Mrs. Cardew. 'I hope he will have no more cause to complain of me. Good-bye.'

One would think it was always summer at St. Denys. It has its full share of rough weather, though, and I have heard people say that it rains there more than in most places. But that summer, when Dick Northcote was amusing himself at home, and Mabel Ashley was shut up within Pensand gates, was singularly brilliant and lovely.

This Sunday afternoon was hot and sleepy and still; the air was heavy, the sun shone through a faint yellow mist, under which the trees seemed to take strange colours, and sounds from a distance fell deadened on one's ear.

Dick hurried down the lane to the Combe. It was a hollow path like a tube, perhaps four feet wide, completely arched over with ivy-bound boughs of low gray old trees, and here and there a bush of honeysuckle hanging so low that his head brushed it as he walked. Half-way down the hill the hedges disappeared, and the path branched out into a steep, slippery, rugged descent of bare granite rock. Below this was some more lane with a low stone wall, bounding a small green field on the left, with a donkey grazing in it, which sloped down to the water. Dick passed this and walked on round the head of the

creek, past the foot of another lane, almost as narrow and rough, which was supposed to be a cart-road, the only approach to a little untidy whitewashed farm that nestled among trees half-way up the head of the Combe. A little further on he got down upon the rocks. The tide was full, and the water was lazily gliding in and lapping against the stones. It was the only thing that moved or spoke in the Combe; the trees and long grass and flowering bushes on its steep sides hung motionless; the long dark ridges of rock showed their teeth in silence.

The stillness was so intense in the yellow misty glow that Dick stood still, doubting if Flora was there; he could almost have heard her breathe. As he stood hesitating, she suddenly rose up from behind a rock not three yards away. With her green and white summer dress, her golden hair, her fair transparent skin, she might have been the nymph of the rivers, disturbed by a rash mortal from her peaceful dreaming on the shore.

'I heard you coming down,' she said, without any particular pleasure in look or tone. 'Who told you I was here?'

'Your mother. Don't be angry with her,' said Dick.

'She little knew what she was doing,' said Flora, half to herself.

'Didn't she, do you think?' said Dick, as he made his way round over the rock ledges to the place where she was standing.

She had risen from one of these steps or ledges, just above high-water mark, in a corner sheltered from sight by a projection of the rocky bank. She now sat down again, and Dick, as he took his place beside her, noticed a packet of letters tied up with ribbon in a little cleft close by. She was watching him, saw his eyes light

on them, and smiled slightly and rather sadly.

'All letters from one friend,' she said. 'Do you possess such a good correspondent?'

'I don't, indeed,' said Dick. 'One leaves that sort of thing to ladies nowadays. And they don't write to me.'

'Ah!' said Flora.

Dick began to feel quite uncanny: her manner was so odd; absent and dreamy, yet present and awake. United to the heavy stillness and oppression of the day, it seemed to draw away from him all his good spirits, his courage even. She might have been a sea enchantress, who had wiled him to this lonely shore, and perhaps would presently glide gently down into the soft oily water that came lapping to her feet. And her mortal lover could not stay behind, but must follow wherever she chose to lead the way. Some wild old legend of the kind began to hover in Dick's brain as Flora sat and gazed at the water. But presently she turned her blue eyes on him, and he felt happier. Feeling as if only by a strong effort he could break the charm that seemed to be binding him, he suddenly laid his hand on hers and clasped it tight.

'Flora,' he said, 'I have something to say to you, and I want to say it at once.'

'Don't, Dick, please,' said Mrs. Lancaster, shaking off his hand.

'Listen to me,' said Dick imploringly. 'I want to tell you—'

'Let me speak first,' said Flora. 'There is something I want to tell you too, and you shall listen to me. After that you may hold your tongue, if you please, for I don't think you will have anything to say.'

'You have no idea, then, what

it is. Nothing could change—' began Dick eagerly.

'Patience. I am not blind or stupid, or very young. I wish you were not so silly. As you are, you have brought something on yourself. I am going to tell you a story.'

'As long as I may stay here,' said Dick, 'I don't care what you tell me.'

'Do you remember asking me one day if I was happy?'

'Ah, that day?'

'I have good cause to remember it too,' said Flora. 'I might have guessed; but I never thought it would come to this. Do you remember me when I was a girl, Dick?'

'What a question! You are just the same now, only far more charming.'

'I believe I am rather nicer than I was then,' said Flora thoughtfully. 'Yes, certainly I was horrid then. You had a happy escape in those days, but I thought it unkind of you to go away without wishing me good-bye.'

'I was desperately sorry,' said Dick; 'but they bullied me so at home. You liked me a little, then, Flora? It was not all my fancy?'

'Liked you? yes, after a fashion. But I did not really care a bit. I wanted to get away from home. I had been reading a lot of novels, and had a notion of grand names and pedigrees. You were the nearest thing to all that.'

Dick laughed, which did him good.

'You might have found somebody more distinguished than me,' he said.

'Nobody that came in my way. O dear, what an idiot I was! Well, after you were gone and that chance was lost, I grew more and more discontented at home. They did not spoil me then, I

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Drawn by M. E. Edwards.]

[Engraved by R. & E. Taylor.]

'Dik, I am going to trust something to your honour—a secret which nobody knows.'

See 'Mrs. Lancaster's Rival,' p. 207.

think, quite as much as they do now; still, they were the kindest parents. But, you know, I had picked up all these ideas; and things were always grating on me that a more obtuse girl would not have noticed—little vulgarities and provincialisms. Then, to crown all, I had an offer from a merchant's clerk at Morebay, a good man, and very well off. But I could not endure the thought of him. Perhaps I was foolish to be so fanciful.'

'That I am sure you were not,' said Dick. He was half lying on the rocks, leaning his head on his hand, and looking up into her face, which softened and became prettier than ever as she talked of her young days.

'You may say so when you have heard all,' said Flora, sighing. 'I could not bear this man, as I tell you. And then there was poor George Lancaster: he was very much in love with me, and quite a gentleman; and I married him, as you know. Ah, dear me! I told you one day that I left all the sunshine behind at St. Denys. I won't go back to those years. Ill-health for him and unhappiness for me. Poor fellow! We were not suited to each other, and his relations did all they could to make me more miserable than I was. O, it was hard! A lonely girl, and so far away from home.'

She paused a minute. Dick held his peace, for he had nothing to say, and only wished that Flora would let her poor dead husband alone.

'Well, that was over,' she went on, in a tone of relief. 'I came back home, and here I have been ever since, as you know; but not without adventures.'

'You were not likely to be without them,' said Dick; but it must be confessed that a cold shudder crept over him. What

could Flora mean by that deepening colour, that happy triumphant smile, which seemed to say that all the past was blotted out and swept away in the light of what she had now to tell him?

'I was ill and dismal enough at first,' she said. 'It is only two years, in fact, since I quite recovered. Now, Dick'—her face had become very grave as she turned to him—'I am going to allude to yesterday. It was very, very kind of you to bring me that bracelet. I was sorry for what my father did at the time, though, after all, I believe it was the best thing. It makes it necessary for me to tell you the truth; and your behaviour and Miss Northcote's, which I feel intensely, makes me owe it to you all the more.'

'The truth? What do you mean?' said Dick vaguely.

'Dick, I am going to trust something to your honour—a secret which nobody knows, except the two people it concerns. You will understand why I tell you; it is the only thing that will really satisfy you. I am very grateful; I look upon you as my best friend, and I am sure you won't betray me. Am I right?'

'Of course,' said Dick hoarsely.

'Between two and three years ago I began to see a good deal more of a person I had always known slightly, and we found out that we had always had a fancy for each other. I certainly never met any one else that— Well, I must only tell you the facts,' she said, leaning forward, and shading her face with her hand. 'We were engaged: there were reasons for keeping it secret; but I hope they won't last much longer, for of course I find myself in a painful position sometimes—now, for instance.'

'Do you mean that you are engaged now?' said Dick slowly,

frowning and staring, as if he could not trust his senses.

'Yes.'

There was a long pause. Dick stared vacantly at the rocks, dimly remembering Mrs. Penny's gossip and other things which had frightened him. Flora lifted her head, and gazed out across the water, her face full of past and present happiness. Presently, however, compassion for Dick found its way in; she turned towards him, and saw something so stony, so like despair, that she was startled out of her calmness.

'O Dick, don't look like that!' she said. 'I am very sorry; I shall always like you so much.'

The voice of the siren had a strange effect on Dick. He sprang upright, shook himself, stood looking at her for a moment, and then sat down again beside her on the rocks.

'I was only thinking,' he said. 'Will you tell me why this should be such a secret?'

'It is his wish,' answered Flora, in a low voice. 'His father is a man of good position, and he is not independent of him. He probably would be very angry; he hopes to see his way more clearly soon. Everybody's relations are not so generous as yours.'

'And this has gone on for two or three years,' said Dick. 'Do you think you are properly treated?'

'I am quite satisfied. All I ask you is to keep the secret.'

'That I have promised,' said Dick. 'I want to ask you one question. Answer it or not, as you choose. Is it Randal Hawke?'

'What can have put him into your head?' said Flora, blushing crimson. 'Well, I suppose I must trust you altogether. You are a gentleman, thank goodness! Yes, it is Randal Hawke. I must know what made you think so.'

'I knew he admired you,' said Dick quietly.

Certainly, with all his weaknesses, he was at heart a gentleman; for it never occurred to him as possible to blacken Randal in Flora's eyes. He was heartily sorry for her; his own disappointment was half forgotten in regret that she should throw her affection away on a lying scoundrel, as he very cordially called Randal to himself. His remembrance of the tone in which Randal had talked of Mrs. Lancaster made him more angry still.

'Heaven grant she may find out her mistake before it is too late!' thought Dick.

In the mean while Flora had taken a letter from the packet beside her, and unfolded it.

'You may look at this signature if you like,' said she. 'You seem a little doubtful. This will show you that I have spoken the truth.'

'No, thank you,' said Dick. 'I don't doubt you in the least; why should I? The mist seems to be changing into fog. Don't you think we had better get out of this?'

Flora was quite ready, and they walked up almost in silence. She was conscious of a respect for Dick such as she had never felt before, combined with a little irritation; he seemed to have taken the downfall of his hopes so very calmly.

Captain and Mrs. Cardew were obliged to keep their surprise and disappointment to themselves. Flora simply told them that she had refused Dick Northcote, and did not know why they should have expected anything else; he was not at all the sort of person for her.

Miss Northcote wondered what could have happened; her nephew was so grave and silent all the evening. It was not till very late

that he said to her, 'She won't have me, aunt Kate.'

'Indeed!' said Miss Northcote, trying not to show her intense joy.

'I have been thinking,' said Dick, 'that I should like to get away from here for a few weeks. Didn't you tell me the other day that Harry Northcote wanted me to go and see him in Yorkshire?'

'Yes. He will be delighted. You could not do better.'

'I shall write to him to-morrow,' said Dick, and relapsed into silence.

CHAPTER XII.

A WET DAY AT PENSAND.

AFTER Dick was gone, a week of rainy weather came to St. Denys. The roses were dashed, and the lovely views were shrouded in mist. No one felt the change more than Mabel Ashley, in her prison at Pensand. While those broad sheets of rain were driving up from the sea, while the wind was howling round the old towers, the trees bowing their heads before it, and the flowers crouching and shivering, she had nothing to do but to sit and look out, and feel that as long as she had the garden there had been nothing really to complain of.

There she sat in the drawing-room window, with her hands before her, the saddest object in that sad anomaly, a wintry day in summer. It was really cold, but General Hawke had not suggested a fire, and those stern bright steel grates looked as if they did not know the meaning of the word. Mabel had soon perceived that, though he called her the mistress of his house, she must not presume to give any orders. Probably the General, who had a good blaze in his own study on

every day but the hottest, never thought that any one so young could feel cold and damp in that handsome comfortable drawing-room.

As Mabel sat there she was busy thinking. She wondered whether this kind of thing was to go on for ever; did the General expect her to spend her life with him at Pensand? And why was she so disappointed, so unhappy? Well, he had been very kind to her when she first came, and he was very kind to her still, but somehow he seemed to have finished all his stories and all he had to say to her. He never interfered with her; she could do exactly as she pleased within the walls, but the worst of it was that she had nothing to do. She wished he would interfere with her more, would give her things to do for him. Then she was surprised to find that she half wished herself back at school.

Anthony Strange had been trying to teach her about flowers, to interest her in botany, but she had no turn for it. She liked the flowers themselves, but could not care about their structure; and when she confessed that, Anthony threw his book aside, and said that after all he was glad to hear it: a thing had not been made such a perfect and beautiful whole that we mortals might pull it to pieces for our instruction.

'What becomes of science with such a notion as that?' said the General rather contemptuously; he had lately taken to appearing whenever Anthony paid his visits.

'I have nothing to do with science,' said Anthony. 'It is the enemy of true civilisation.'

This had happened just before the rainy weather had set in, and since then Mr. Strange had not been at the Castle. Mabel won-

dered why, and thought it rather unkind of him; he might know how lonely she was, and he was rather fond of being out on a stormy day.

'Nobody cares for me, and I am left quite alone,' thought Mabel to herself, as she sat there. 'I can't even write a letter to any one. O dear, how unhappy I am! I wish his aunt would come and see me again. I do believe she is kind, though she didn't seem to like me much that day. Or if I might go to Carweston to stay with Mrs. Strange!'

With so few happy things to think about, perhaps it would have been unnatural if Dick's sins had not been forgotten, and if the journey with him had not returned to the girl's mind in all its pleasantness. But Mabel did not often indulge herself in thinking of it. That afternoon she could hardly get rid of it; and her sad little experience of life, the conviction that the nicest things were the most likely to be wrong and disappointing, brought a few tears to her eyes. She leaned forward and hid her face, very much ashamed of them. Poor discontented Mabel! The driving rain and wind prevented her from hearing a footstep on the gravel, and she did not at all know that somebody with a greatcoat and umbrella was standing outside looking on, while she was shaken by two or three sobs, the more violent for being repressed.

After watching her for a minute, the man with the umbrella turned quietly away, and walked off round the house. A few minutes later, a step in the library made Mabel start up and hastily dry her eyes. Then Randal Hawke opened the door and came in. He was looking singularly well and handsome; his eyes were bright, and he came forward and shook

hands with Mabel in a very pleasant and cordial way.

'I bring rain, don't I?' he said, 'but this is more serious than the last. How frightfully wintry it is on the top of your mountain! and no fire! No wonder your hand is like an icicle.'

Randal rang the bell vigorously, and the butler appeared in astonishment.

'This fire must be lighted at once, Stevens.—When I come home they find that there is a master in the house,' he said, laughing, to Mabel. 'I make a point of being *exigeant*; it is good for them. Have you had this sort of thing for a week? How moped you must be!'

'I think it began last Tuesday,' said Mabel.

She had not yet made up her mind whether Randal's society was better than none. Ten minutes later she was inclined to think that it was, when a great fire was blazing up, reflected in the steel, and flashing and dancing all over the room; when Randal had established her and himself in arm-chairs close to it, and had given his final orders to the butler, 'Bring tea at once.'

'Shall I tell the General you are here, sir?' said Stevens.

'No.'

Randal was much pleasanter than he had been on that former occasion. The bad weather seemed to have no depressing effect on him, and Mabel could not help being pleased at the attentive kindness with which he treated her. Her spirits rose as the fire blazed up. After gazing at it contentedly for a minute or two, she looked at him and smiled, and Randal saw that the odd little face could light up very brightly and sweetly.

'It really was cold,' she said.

'Of course it was. One might

as well be in the Arctic regions. No, don't disturb yourself. I'll give you your tea.'

Mabel watched him at the tea-tray, and thought with some amusement that those small hands of his were just fitted for their work.

'Are you getting warmer? Or shall I fetch a railway-rug and wrap you in it?' asked Randal presently.

Mabel laughed quite merrily.

'O no, thank you. I am quite warm already.'

'To tell you the truth,' said Randal, arranging himself comfortably in his armchair, 'I came down to see how you were getting on. Do you ever have presentiments?'

'No,' said Mabel.

'They are useful things sometimes. I had one two days ago. It said that Pensand was very dismal, especially in wet weather, and that its inmates were likely to die of cold and dulness. That unless I made haste to look after them, something serious would certainly happen. So I made my arrangements, and came. But certainly I did not expect to find you without a fire. Why didn't you order one?'

'I—did not know that I might,' said Mabel.

'Please to understand that while you are in this house the servants obey you. You must forgive my father. Old people are thoughtless and selfish; they can't help it.'

'If the General had thought of my being cold, I am sure he would—' began Mabel rather indignantly.

'Just as I said. He did not think. Neither does he think of your not being cheerful. Now, Miss Ashley, tell me—do you still think Pensand such a charming place; find yourself quite happy; want nothing beyond it?'

Mabel was silent.

'Do you never find yourself bored, especially in wet weather? Now you are truthful, I'm sure, and you really can't deny it,' said Randal, bending forward and smiling.

'It is my own fault,' said Mabel. 'I am not clever, and I have so few occupations.'

'Poverina!' said Randal under his breath. 'Well, I can't stand that, you know. I feel responsible for my father's doings, and I can't let him bore you to death. I hope you won't be angry with me, but I brought you down a few books; novels, and so on. You must have read everything in the house by this time.'

'Thank you. It was very kind indeed of you to think of it,' said Mabel, flushing with pleasure.

After a minute Randal began again.

'You must not think that my father means to neglect you. He is immensely fond of you. It would vex him beyond everything if he thought you were unhappy. And if I ask you to bear with him a little, you must remember it is not for very long. As soon as you are twenty-one you can say good-bye to Pensand.'

'I never quite realised that before,' said Mabel, opening her eyes very wide.

'They certainly are remarkable. Only almost too big,' thought her companion.

'Yes, of course you can,' he said. 'The whole world will be before you.'

'But I have nobody to live with, nowhere to go,' sighed Mabel to herself. 'O, don't think I am unhappy here. The General is always kind. Only it is a little lonely sometimes, and I am very silly.'

'I could tell you something,

but you would never forgive me,' said Randal.

'What is it?'

'You will promise not to like me any less? No, don't say that would be impossible.'

'I was not going to say anything of the kind,' said Mabel, brightening up and laughing.

'Thank you. Then let me confess. I came up to the window just now, when you were sitting there. To say that I was shocked, Miss Ashley, is a very mild word. I very nearly went straight to my father and collared him. But I thought I would try first what I could do to mend matters. I think I shall tell him, as a warning—'

'O, please, pray don't!' exclaimed Mabel, full of shame and distress. 'I am so sorry. It was very naughty and silly of me, just like a child. Please, you must not tell him.'

'I would not do anything to vex you,' said Randal gravely. 'Only don't let it happen again. I know what it must be for you without any companion. I was afraid of it. My father, you see, will make a hermit of himself. I wonder, is there any one you would like to ask to stay with you? I might make him agree to that, perhaps.'

Mabel thought over her only acquaintance, her schoolfellows.

One by one she fancied them laughing at her, quarrelling with her, gushing, talking nonsense, mimicking Miss Wrench behind her back. No; solitude was better than such society as theirs. She looked up at Randal and shook her head.

'No,' she said, 'thank you. I have no friends. I would rather be alone.'

Randal stared, and stroked his moustache.

'Then I don't know what we can do,' he said. 'You can suggest nothing?'

'O, not in this weather, of course; but if I might ever go out a little, I should like to see St. Denys and Carweston and the country.'

'And Morebay and the sea,' said Randal. 'Yes, we must try what we can do. This time I can only spare one clear day; but in a week or two I shall be down again, and we will have some drives. I shall be too happy to show you the country.'

Mabel found that evening very pleasant. The General was delighted to have his son at home; he was very proud of him, Mabel thought. Everything in the house seemed to brighten up; the servants did their work more briskly, the General told his most amusing stories, and Randal's comments were more amusing still. He was very quiet, though so full of life. He scarcely ever laughed, and all his movements were deliberate and graceful; he spoke slowly, moved his eyes slowly, but said everything he meant to say, and saw all that there was to be seen. He was very agreeable, and showed none of the cynicism that had shocked Mabel on her first acquaintance with him. A much more worldly woman might have been flattered by his marked attention to herself. Still, she did not feel quite happy or quite comfortable, and, though she listened and was amused, felt as if she had nothing to say. She could not chatter naturally to Randal and his father as she could to Anthony. She was aware of the difference, though she did not understand it; for certainly Randal seemed quite as much interested in her happiness as Anthony.

AMONGST SOME CURIOS.

A Smoking-Room Mixture.

OURS is, perhaps, as original a smoking-room as can be found in the United Kingdom. Each one of us, the male members of the family, has travelled, and contributed something towards the formation, within the four rather limited walls, of a regular museum, so that what with pictures and scrolls, trophies of arms and pipes, cases of strange birds and animals, ledges of china and porcelain, niches filled with quaint odds and ends, and bookshelves, there is scarcely a square inch left for the next contribution. Some of these curios have stories attached to them, without which they would appear absolutely valueless in the eyes of nine out of every ten visitors. Were they symphonies in green or gray, or bits of Queen Anne domestic decoration, they might be appreciated; but as they are mere odd bits, seemingly without grace or harmony, their worth, except by us, is unrecognised.

On a big nail—the driving in of which nearly jeopardised the house, inasmuch as it pierced a gas-pipe—hangs an American fire-helmet; a stout leather hat, with a peak, a huge flap behind, and a polished plate in front, on which in white letters appears the word 'Independence.' It has seen excellent service, as the indentations and scratches show, and it saved the life of its wearer; hence its value to us as a curio.

One of us, Jack, a regular rolling-stone, was long a resident in San Francisco, and 'for the fun

of the thing' joined the 'Independence Fire Company' of that city. Then he was a wild devil-may-care sort of a fellow, and, except when laid up from the effects of his own foolhardiness, never missed a fire. Well, there was a big fire in Montgomery-street. Jack's engine was one of the first up, and was working away in the very midst of the excitement and danger. It was a nasty fire, says Jack, because it broke out in a kerosine store placed in the very centre of a huge block of very lofty buildings, and the Independence engine was working in a small space hemmed in on all sides by big ugly walls. Still they had the place of honour, and they meant to stick to it; besides, Jack as an Englishman and in charge of the engine would not show the white feather with all the other engines around. They got the fire fairly under at about two in the morning, and were 'reeling up' previous to quitting the scene of action, when the engineer in charge shouted out, 'Look out, chaps! There's a wall a-coming!' and bolted. 'So I tried to do,' said Jack; 'but the wall was too quick for us. Some of our fellows had taken their helmets off, for they're infernally heavy and hot, you know; but we all ran. I don't remember much more; but when I came to, I found my helmet jammed down over my mouth, and felt as if I'd been hit all over. I looked around, and saw our dainty engine, with its polished work and its painted

body, all smashed under a ton or so of stone and brick, and from under the mass men were dragging bodies, which they covered with white cloths and carried off on stretchers. I then knew that I'd escaped something bad; for I found out that the men who had taken off their helmets had been done for by the falling wall, whilst the engineer, two others, and myself, who had kept ours on, were almost untouched.' Jack brought the helmet home, and it hangs—battered and indented—in the place of honour it deserves.

Above it on the wall hangs a huge rusty key. Not at all an ordinary key, far too big, clumsy, and unsophisticated in its ins and outs for the workmanship of to-day—evidently a key dating from the good old days, when sheer strength and hugeness were considered sufficient safeguards against attack. It is the key of the Royal Opera House at Lisbon, and this is how it came into our possession.

One of us, about ten years back, was a midshipman upon one of her Majesty's vessels, anchored off Lisbon after a pleasant picnicking cruise in the Mediterranean. Half a dozen of his rank, 'sucking Nelsons' as weather-beaten lieutenants termed them, got leave for a day on shore. Midshipman-like, they made the most of their excursion. They smoked Lisbon cabbage, bought at fabulous prices as undoubted Antonio Caruncho; they drank red Val de Peñas like water; they leered under the mantillas of decorous maidens going to Mass; they rode full tilt along the most crowded streets on mule back; in fact, they did all that they should not have done, and left undone all that they should have done, until at last, wearied by successive Lisbon cabbages, frequent potations of Val de Peñas, and constant rows with officials

and duennas, they sought rest on the steps of the Royal Opera House. The singers were rehearsing the evening's opera within, and it was soothing to the midshipman ears; they listened entranced. 'Let's go in and see what the beggars are up to,' suggested an active-minded one. In they went, clattering, laughing, and pushing one another, animated with any feeling but reverence for the place and the situation. The performers stopped short, it was too much; they might be damned by the Lisbon mob in the evening, but to be interrupted in rehearsal by a parcel of English boys was going too far. So the actors, descending in a body from the stage, by sheer weight and numbers, pushed the intruders back on to the steps. The half dozen young monkeys, shut out ignominiously, stood where they were pushed, and looked about for means of revenge. 'Let's lock them in,' suggested the ardent spirit above mentioned. There was the big key—it turned easily. The actors were shut in; and the midshipmen, fully satisfied that their country was no longer affronted with impunity, quietly returned to her Majesty's ship. He who locked the door and who pocketed the key brought it home, and it has hung ever since in our smoking-room.

On the mantelpiece, amidst a crowd of odd nicknacks, is a wooden sword of Japanese manufacture. Japanese swords of all shapes and sizes are, during the present mania for Oriental curios, common enough; but this one is peculiar.

It is the sword which 'assisted' at the committal of *hara kiri*—vulgarly called 'happy despatch'—of one of the most notorious foreigner-haters that ever made the early settlement of Europeans in Japan dangerous. As there is

very much ignorance about the real nature of this *hara kiri*, it may be as well to say that its performance does not necessarily imply suicide. In the olden days, when the strictest codes of chivalry and military honour ruled the land, or at least the upper classes, a nobleman or warrior deeming it necessary to commit *hara kiri* generally called in an 'assistant,' in the person of some very near relation or very intimate friend. Thus this little wooden sword is described as having only 'assisted' at the ceremony of *hara kiri*, inasmuch as it has never tasted human blood, the actual killing being performed by the friend or relation with another sword. And so in the case of the blackguard above referred to—Desyayemon. He coolly waited for a party of English tourists, who he knew would pass a certain temple at a certain hour, and killed two of them. There was of course a cry for vengeance from one end of the European settlement to the other. Desyayemon was given up, and condemned to be publicly executed; but as this disgrace would have entailed ruin on his large family, his prayer that he might be allowed to commit *seppuku* was allowed. The one of us who—perhaps from a morbid curiosity—obtained entrance to the place where the tragedy was to be enacted, thus briefly describes it: 'We were shown into the garden of a temple overlooking the European settlement of Yokohama—a dozen of us altogether, as representing the foreign community. Under a group of trees, opposite to where we were requested to seat ourselves, the turf had been raised into a sort of platform some twelve feet square, and covered with fresh white matting. On the matting was a small lacquered

tray, such as one sees now in five out of every six London drawing-rooms, and in this tray lay a small knife wrapped in paper. The garden was hung round with white cloth, so that no low caste or menial eye might be witness of the tragedy. Every one present preserved the strictest silence, and the cold stateliness of every one and everything gave us a sort of inkling of what was to come, and made one or two of us wish we had stayed away. As the temple bell boomed five o'clock Desyayemon entered the enclosure, followed by his "assistant," girded with the usual two swords of the soldier. He placed himself opposite the lacquer tray, squatting on his heels, *more Japonico*, his harsh cruel features wearing an expression of the utmost indifference to everything around. An official in full costume then stepped forward, and read from a scroll a statement that the prisoner Desyayemon had been guilty of an unwarranted and brutal attack upon harmless foreigners, and that he was now prepared to pay the penalty of his crime. When the official had finished, Desyayemon bowed his head and murmured a few words, the tenor of which we did not catch. Then ensued a dead silence. The prisoner, still squatting, slowly proceeded to strip off his upper clothing; meanwhile the "assistant" crept behind him, with his long gleaming sword held ready to strike. The disrobing accomplished, Desyayemon shouted, "So be it to all Western barbarians who dare to soil our fair land by their presence!" Stooping forward, he made a move as if to grasp the sword on the tray before him. The "assistant" seized the opportunity, and with one swift blow of his blade severed the head of the murderer from his body. Sickened with the

sight, we prepared to go, when the official who had read out the sentence motioned to me that I might take the small sword as a token that justice had been done.' Thus it came into our possession, and has since remained amongst our other curios.

On the frame of a quaint piece of old Ningpo wood-carving rests a small, dirty, rusty metal flower. Nine people out of ten would take it up and put it down without remark, yet it is a relic. It was once gilded, and formed one of a cluster which decorated a mirror in the drawing-room of one of the sweetest *bijou* residences in St. Cloud,—that is, the St. Cloud of olden days. The house, a good specimen of the old French *maison de campagne*, belonged to a famous Parisian *dilettante*, whose sole occupation was to crowd it with the choicest porcelain, the most beautiful specimens of antique and modern art, rare pictures, old furniture, and many thousands of quaint Old-World volumes. Save when he had a reunion of artists and men of letters, the old man, a personal friend of our family, lived in retirement. His family had grown up and were scattered about the world, his wealth was great, so that he could afford to spend his time in procuring treasures for his house at St. Cloud. So he lived for many years; then the great storm which shook the world burst in 1870, the Teuton came, sweeping through the fair land, and the owners of country *châteaux* fled to the capital. But our old man, so passionately fond was he of his house, of its varied contents, of the great sloping lawn, the grand old trees, the raised promenade studded with huge vases which commanded the celebrated 'Point de Vue de St. Cloud,' that, though he knew the circle of Prussian steel to be

closing in around, would not budge an inch. Bustling, glittering, gay little St. Cloud was as still as the grave the day before the French batteries opened fire. Not until the very shells were bursting in his garden, and the *débris* of fallen houses had choked the road outside his gate, did they force the old man to fly across the river. As he turned the angle of the street he saw a shell enter at the roof of his beloved house, and rip the wall open to the ground. Yet it was not destroyed. The Prussians made it a *corps de garde*, and drank the old man's choice champagne out of thin-necked Bohemian beakers and bowls carved by Benvenuto Cellini. But alas for the treasures of the house! Shattered into atoms lay priceless porcelain, glass, statues, mouldings, carvings, and pictures, which had charmed the eyes of half the *savants* of Europe. Not that the German occupants lacked appreciation of the value and beauty of art; for all that had not been broken by the shells they seized as lawful booty. Finally the house itself was wrecked by the French batteries on the heights of Sèvres, placed there to dislodge the Germans from St. Cloud. Several shells burst at once inside, and nothing but the four walls were left standing. I visited the place not very long after the last bombardment, when the ruins of the beautiful village were yet smouldering around the untouched church, and when the only signs of animal life were a few houseless wretches crouched under extemporised shelters of stones and planks, and some disconsolate cats and dogs. I had literally to climb into what remained of the house over heaps of ruins and rubbish: a piece of parquet flooring, strangely perfect, showed me

whereabouts I stood, and the only object I could find to carry away as a memento was the little metal flower. A year or two after, I visited the place, found the house entirely rebuilt, and its old possessor, strangely altered by time and trouble, as busy as in the old time amongst his new collection of treasures. He told me that he should never equal the one destroyed, but still hoped to gather together a few valuable nicknacks. This, however, he did not live to do.

Spread out against the opposite wall is an old-fashioned fan; very big, very heavy, and curiously painted with scenes of love and courtship. It belonged to an ancestress of ours, who was a lady-in-waiting to Queen Charlotte, and daughter of the Ranger of Exmoor. Lady Dolly—that was her name—appears to have been something more than a hoyden, if the tale told of her in connection with the fan be true. None of us believe it, but we invariably tell it when the fan is noticed.

She was very pretty (her portrait may still be seen in the *Book of England's Beauty*, published about 1770), and possessed the most unbounded animal spirits, fostered no doubt by the fine open air she breathed, and the freedom and ease which characterised the courts of the old Devonian squires. At seventeen years of age she was reputed the prettiest girl in a county famed for pretty girls; yet, so far from having her head turned by knowledge of her own beauty and flattery, she had been known, on the eve of a grand entertainment, to throw off her festal robes and jewels, disappear, and be discovered dancing and jesting with the village lasses. No one could control her, but no one could be angry with her. 'Lady Dolly' was a synonym

in the rude cottages for miles round for all that was gracious, kindly, and pleasing; and although the young squires were a little afraid of her (she was as handy with her fists as with her tongue, and had wound up more than one sharp retort with a box on the ears), there was not one but was head over heels in love with her, or who would not have given his life for her. In fact she was the idol of the county, and it was a sad day when, to gratify her mother's ambition, she was carried off to do lady-in-waiting's duties in London.

Amongst her many admirers was a young Devonshire squire named Blake. He was a fine dashing young fellow, of good family and good means, but the friends and advisers of Lady Dolly looked upon him as an impudent adventurer for daring to aspire so high. But she really loved him, and nobody had yet thwarted her will successfully. When she was in town with the court they corresponded; when she returned to Devonshire for a short respite from her duties, they met and walked together.

One night she was missing from the paternal hall. Mr. Blake was missing from Bideford also. There was no doubt about it; they had eloped.

Every measure was taken to stop the fugitives; no post-chaise could leave the county without being examined, and Blake's rivals were foremost in the hunt. Some of the pursuers arrived at a remote inn on the borders of Cornwall late one wild winter night. Beds were not to be had, for a lady and gentleman had just bespoken every room. Outside a door was a valise with the name 'Francis Blake, Bideford,' upon it; this betrayed the fugitive lovers. The seekers hammered at the door. Young Blake opened it in person.

One of the young squires, intoxicated with the success of having traced the runaway couple, called him a coward. The proud Devon blood rushed to his face, and he dealt the youth a blow with his fist which sent him reeling downstairs; but he paid dearly for his temerity. Ere he could recover himself, he was thrown to the ground by the other assailants, and in falling his own sword pierced him to the heart. Aroused by the clamour, Lady Dolly rushed out, and seeing Blake lying on the ground bathed in blood, hurled the fan she held in her hand at the heads of the stupefied squires, disappeared, and was never seen again.

So runs the tale of the fan. That it belonged to Lady Dolly there is no doubt; but that it was acquired under the tragical circumstances above related, may be open to question.

The last curio to be noticed in this paper has also a tragical history attached to it. It is a battered, weather-worn, old alpenstock; not one of your 'personally conducted' belongings, white, smooth, and with the name of every mountain in Switzerland burnt into it; but a stout iron-shod staff, made in England, and made, as are most English articles, for use, and not for show and swagger.

It belonged to an old Haileybury chum of mine, and to me is the most valuable curio in the room. We were out for our hard-earned holiday some ten years back, and had wandered about Switzerland during a happy three weeks in the month of May, before the tourist tide began to set in, walking, climbing, and sketching in the fullest enjoyment of perfect health and absolute freedom from care. To wind up, we determined to have a peep at Italy. So from Ragaz we got to Coire,

and from Coire to Tasis, at the entrance of the pass well known as the Via Mala. The water, or the goat's-milk, or too much exertion had not agreed with me; so I arranged to go by diligence to Chiavenna, whilst he walked.

'Good-bye, old fellow,' said he; 'it's a splendid walk, and I wish you could come; anyhow, we shall meet at Chiavenna.' And he swung round the corner with the long slinging step which had tired me out many a time.

I had a half mind to follow him; but the contingency of being suddenly taken ill in a desolate mountain region was too serious to be risked, so I returned to the hotel. Chiavenna was very soon seen; and Conradi's hotel not being cheerful, I retired to bed at an early hour, feeling so much better, that I determined on the morrow to ascend the Splügen road for some distance and meet my friend H. He should have arrived at Chiavenna the evening of the day after I had got there; but not only were no signs of him visible to me, but the Coire diligence people said that it was fully three weeks since they had passed any pedestrian on the road other than the peasants of the country. I became uneasy, and finally desperate, when, after two days, there was still no sign of H., so I determined to organise a regular search. I gathered the guides of the place together, told them my object, and promised large reward for success. I was too ill again to go myself, so I waited at the hotel. In the evening they returned, saying that they had searched every cleft and gully on each side of the road, but without coming across a sign of the traveller. I had yet one ray of hope. Perhaps he had taken the wrong turning at the village of Splügen, and had wandered on to

Bellinzona. But in that case—in itself very improbable—he would certainly have reached Chiavenna long since. Still a messenger was sent to Bellinzona to inquire at the inns; he returned with the same reply. I grew heart-sick, and knowing that my worst anticipations had been realised, packed up and prepared to return homewards. Passengers were few at so early a period of the year; so that liberal ‘backsheesh’ induced the driver of the diligence to promise that he would go slowly along until the head of the pass was reached to give a last chance.

We were just at the head of the pass when we met a peasant with an alpenstock over his shoulder. I knew the stick at a glance. The diligence was stopped, and the man, terribly frightened, said that he had picked it up in a cleft just off the road. Of course I descended, left the diligence to pursue its journey, and searched with the peasant. All that day we searched, and I slept in his rude hut for the night. Not a trace could we find; and the alpenstock was all I ever obtained to keep in remembrance of my poor friend’s death.

PAS DES PATINEURS.

I.

HARK, on the ice how our skates are ringing !
Down the river we quickly fly,
Swift as the swallows their circles winging,
Swifter than clouds in wind-swept sky.

II.

Red shines the sun through his misty curtain,
Cold blows the wind, but naught care we;
For on our feet are the ‘shoes of swiftness,’
And in our hearts young blood beats free.

III.

So, hey for the frost with its crystal mirror,
Binding the river’s rolling tide !
Long last the ice, and long may we gaily,
Skating together, joyful, glide.

A. C.

THE INCONVENIENCES OF A LIMITED INCOME.

I THINK it must be obvious, on reflection, to every intelligent being, that there is a considerable amount of inconvenience attendant on a limited income. In case he disputes this axiomatic truth, I am prepared to argue the point with him. Of course it is satisfactory to possess an income, although it may be burdened by an income-tax. 'An empty purse is a great curse,' as the Scotch proverb feelingly remarks. All those who deal in the most rudimentary principles of political economy deplore the wretched combination of fixed incomes and rising prices. The fixed income, as implied by the phrase, has its limitations, which are frequently of a coarse and repulsive kind. For myself, as a philosopher, my natural wants are few and very simple. Give me my little dinner, my cellar, and my library, abundant society and locomotion, and I really do not care if I have only fourpence-halfpenny to rattle in my pocket. The system of human society has, however, yet to be constructed upon this simplified basis. The practical outcome is that on every side I am beset with considerable inconveniences arising from a limited income. Inconveniences are in some degree worse than misfortunes. They are the gnats, midges, and mosquitoes of life. They are the tiny Lilliputians that chain us to the ground as securely as the most gigantic Brobdingnagian could do so. You may be smothered beneath an accumulation of sand-grains as surely as you may be smashed by granite. And of all

inconveniences, there are none that are more vexatious in their way than those belonging to a limited income.

I might of course speak of the more obvious and glaring inconveniences belonging to this ill-conditioned state of things. There has happened to some of us that unpleasant quarter of an hour which you spend in the study of *paterfamilias*, to whom you have been referred by the young lady, and who desires to have a full explanation of your condition and prospects in life. He declines to say, 'Youth is no objection; here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy!' He inquires whether you are able to maintain his daughter in the comfort and luxuries to which she has been accustomed. These comforts include, among similar modest items, a box at the Opera and a horse and groom for Rotten Row. You mention your limited income, and have to confess to the contemptible slowness of its dimensions. You at once encounter the cynical smile and the deprecating gesture; you are told, with hands of wild rejection, 'Go!' Similarly you cannot give the premium for the business which you would prefer; you cannot effect the military exchange which you want; you cannot go to the particular college you would like; you cannot take up the shares you would like; you cannot take a part in the particular syndicate you would like,—because your income is a limited income, with all its attendant inconveniences. You think of those mar-

vellous scenes by those great masters of fiction, Disraeli and Dumas. You are not like the wonderful count who has unlimited credit on the three best bankers in Paris; and there is no Sidonia who will give you enough gold to compose the lions on Solomon's steps. Your destiny is inexorably fixed with all the rigidity of economical law. Indeed, some very sensible people have gone so far as to argue that a limited income is all a mistake, and, contrary at least to the opening thesis of this paper, think that it is better to be without it than be with it. They are certainly able to produce wise saws and modern instances very well deserving of attention in support of their opinions.

For instance, some young men, finding that they have the wherewithal to satisfy the needs of the day, appear to debar themselves from all the avenues to distinction in life. They are destitute of that necessity which is the primary stimulus of all effort; they have no need to 'break their birth's invidious bar;' they do not press into the foremost ranks of some calling and profession. These are the men who never marry, who systematically decry marriage, and who pass a selfish unlovely life on a small or snug independence. The best thing that often happens to such men is that they lose their 'little all' in some of those speculations which profess limited liability, and often involve unlimited ruin. Then they are in deep waters; they must strike out, sink or swim. Of course some of them sink; but some of them, even without bladders, come safe to some sort of haven. Then I have known men who have been so disgusted with the inconveniences of a limited income that they have resolved to exchange it for a short and merry expenditure.

They say that the interest is so very small that it is of no earthly use to them, and therefore they resolve to spend their principal. They capitalise their income, and then dispose merrily of their lump-sum. This is very much the way with our American cousins; they make a fortune at home, consume it abroad, and then go home to make another. Unfortunately this cannot be relied on as a general rule. We often hear of people who are said to run through two or three fortunes; but there are many people who have no chance of careering through a single one. Many a spendthrift lives to regret the limited income which he has despised.

But I speak feelingly. I assert in the most undisguised way that there are undoubted inconveniences attending the possession of a limited income. They meet and baffle one at every turn. I am making a long journey, and should like to travel by a Pullman car. I am obliged to go second class, with lady's-maids and livery-servants, or even by a wretched third. I get to Switzerland for a holiday, and I long to go on to Florence, to Cyprus, to the Nile. But I have only ten days and a couple of ten-pound notes, and my movements are checked by the limitations of impecuniosity. No statute of limitation is more severe in its restrictions than these. I should like to take a hansom, and I 'bus it, or proceed on that renowned steed, Shanks' mare. My pretty cousin Fanny gets married, and all the tables in the drawing-room are covered with her presents. I had rather a weakness for Fanny myself once, and should have liked to have given her a gorgeous present that would have outshone them all. But my little offering, which has cost me what would

keep me in cigars for months, is left in the shade. When I was last abroad I should have liked to have had a boatman for the lake, and a guide for the mountain. At the risk of shivering my boat or my neck against a rock, I had to rely on my own unaided and undisciplined exertions. Then, as for church collections, I sympathise deeply with the interesting causes so eloquently pleaded for; but my limited means have induced me to lay up a small stock of threepenny-bits and the slight residue of foreign coins which I was unable to dispose of abroad. I should like to take in the lordly *Times*, but I am reduced to a 'penny daily.' I should like to drink champagne, but I profess to prefer bitter beer. I should like to help my brother-in-law Jones, who is terribly out-at-elbows, but I must content myself with good wishes. I should like Belgravia, but I am consigned to Bloomsbury. I should like to buy new books and periodicals, but must be content to get more than full value for my solitary guinea at Mudie's. I should like to tip servants and railway porters, but they would look on my small fee with contempt. I should like to scatter my small change, but I recollect the remoteness of quarter-day. One's freedom of action is terribly impeded. I am in the midst of a vexatious system of checks, balances, and counteractions. They are the stinging inconveniences of a limited income.

I have a friend whom I will call Mentor. He must have been lineally descended from the companion of Telemachus, and his more immediate ancestor must have been that good little boy of *Evenings at Home* grown up to man's estate, the little philosopher of Salisbury Plain. He at least

has no sympathy with the pessimism of Hartmann or Schopenhauer. He is pleased to remonstrate with me on the line of argument which I have been adopting. He strongly inclines to the belief that whatever is, is right. He quotes the lines from the *Essay on Man*:

'In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.'

But I have ventured to suggest another reading, over which future editors and commentators may fight as much as they like:

'In spite of pride, spite erring poet's song,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is wrong.'

'But,' argues my mild-eyed mild-voiced Mentor, 'don't you see that you have been making a long series of blunders in these long series of complaints? It is far better for you to walk than to ride. You want Banting, and the walk will do you good. It is far better for you to eat a moderate dinner than a sumptuous dinner; it will save you from dyspepsia and gout. You are not like a great earl I know of, who has always an elaborate banquet on his table, and dines off an apple and a biscuit. You are really just as well off in a third-class carriage as in a Pullman car; the difference is mainly in the idea. Never you mind for cousin Fanny and the magnificent present; she is another man's property now, and you have no further concern in her affairs. If you exchange a book most days at Mudie's, you will do as much reading as if you belonged to the London Library or the British Museum. True it is very nice and amiable of you to want to help other people, but then it may be quite as well that you should let them help themselves. In point of fact, you see that it is far better, develops vigour and independence, that you should climb and row for your-

self, even at a little wholesome risk, than going on the bladder system in swimming. Of course I feel for your losing the *Times*, if any one can be really said to lose it in the haunts of civilisation; but if you did not take in the penny papers,' added Mentor, with an air of insuperable modesty, 'you would lose the inestimable advantage of perusing some of my own lucubrations.'

Of course it was impossible to controvert the last item of this great moral account. The optimist theory is certainly very encouraging. For the moment a pleasant *couleur de rose* seemed to spread itself over the facts of individual and social life. But the hard inexorable logic of our existence still brings us back to the unhappy conviction that a limited income has its inconveniences. This is a conviction which painfully impresses the mind towards quarter-day, when the non-elastic ends refuse to meet, and you have practically mortgaged your income for the most part. There was once a necessitous clergyman who was reproached for his want of faith. 'Faith!' he exclaimed; 'I have lots of faith. It's that wretched butcher and baker who have not got enough faith.' Our impecuniosity is felt only one degree less severely by others than by ourselves. If, for instance, a tradesman's autograph is wanting to his account, and the rent has to wait beyond the rent-day, all the philosophy in the world will not prevent unpleasant thoughts which may be prophetic of unpleasant words, possibly unpleasant legal proceedings. It is not so much the loss of the money as the loss of what money brings. Money means so much. It means education, travel, scenery, society, good food and wine when these are the best of medi-

cines, change of climate when this is the only cure. I suppose the original design was that every one who had great superfluities should administer to those who are greatly necessitous. But this arrangement only works to a limited extent; at present 'there's something in the world amiss.' It is one great inconvenience of a limited income that one has to do without luxuries which circumstances make necessities. It is also a great inconvenience to be wanting in the power to help when you have the desire. But the desire may not be worth much. I knew a man who had limited means, and he was always longing that he might have means which should be practically unlimited. He would be a sort of walking Providence, relieving poverty, succouring the distressed, encouraging merit. He became a rich man, and a most awful screw, and never gave even where he was accustomed to give, where he had given before; the claims on his income and new position 'putting it out of his power.'

It often happens to the man of limited, as compared with him of unlimited, income, as to a man of small, compared to one of large, estate. In a large estate much of the ground is unproductive, much is cultivated below its capabilities, and only a certain proportion is retained for purposes of adornment and delight. Perhaps the man who has only a moderate demesne has quite as much to show as his large-acred neighbour. So it is that the limited income practically gives its owner as much as the very large income. In books, music, society, he has as much enjoyment as the richest. In fact no man, however rich, can absolutely enjoy more than a few thousands a year. All the rest goes to the army of servitors

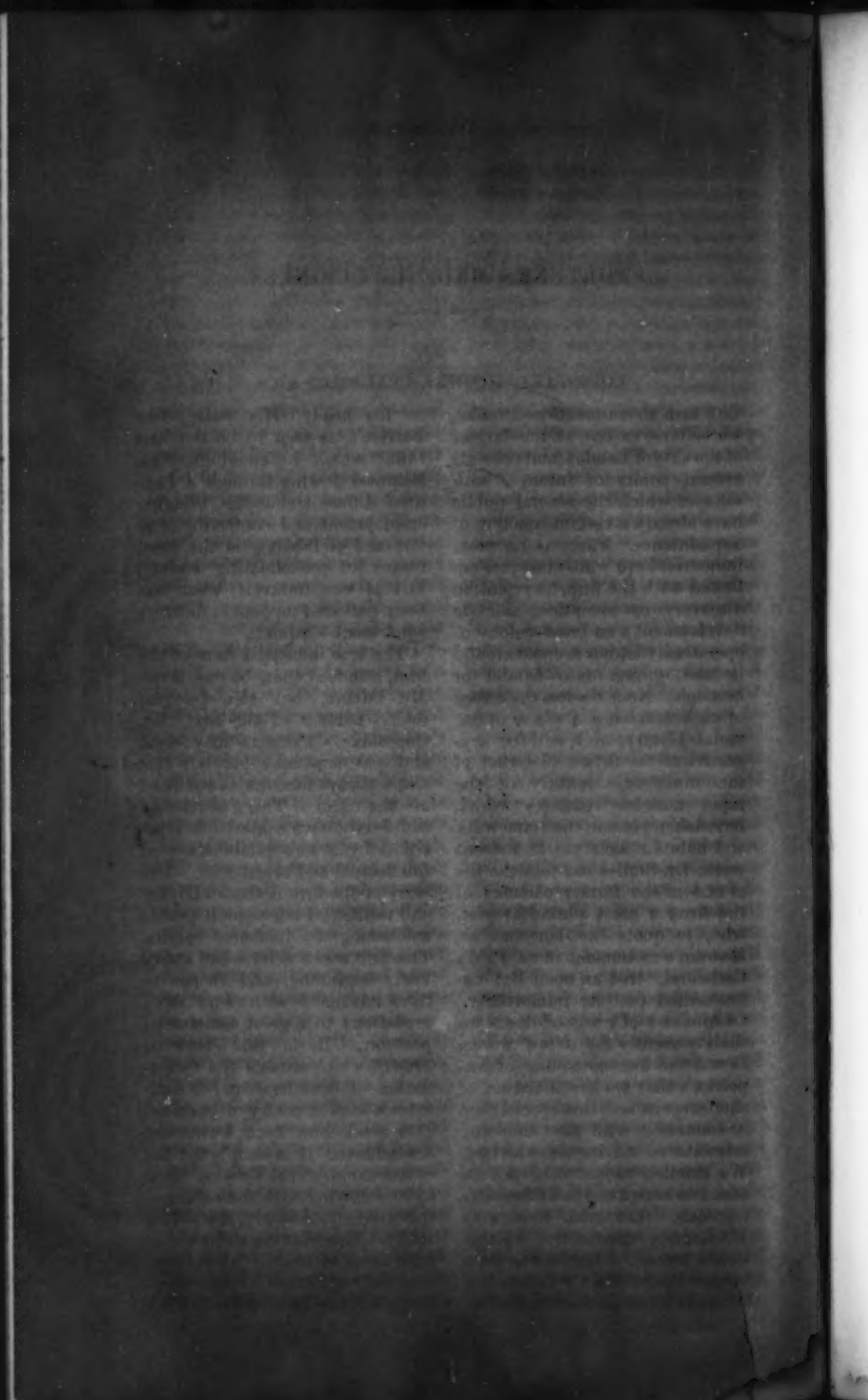
and retainers. And when the income arrives at a certain amount many a rich man has to work like a horse to save himself from being cheated, and to keep a proper supervision over his affairs. He goes into his study, often the poorest little back room in his stately mansion, and works away like a clerk from ten to four. I have known a man with forty thousand a year work much harder than a clerk, and kill himself with hard work. But still, with a large income anything can be done. But with the limited income, and this is the crowning inconvenience, you are hedged in by a thousand limitations—'cabinéd, cribbed, confined.' Lord Beaconsfield says that it is a very happy thing to possess ten thousand a year, and be only credited with five. It is a correspondingly unhappy thing to be credited with

double the amount you actually possess; to be mixed up in the race of gentility; to be always at Agony Point; to appear mean when you are really liberal; to be an earthen vessel among the brazen vessels; to be merely lacquered and not genuine coin. These are the inconveniences of a limited income; it requires immense courage and tact to control them, and not all of us do it very successfully. 'Give me neither poverty nor riches,' said the Wise Man; but I think most people mentally add, 'especially not poverty.' Some of the greatest writers of Port Royal have eloquently discussed the 'Praises of Poverty.' I have no wish to contradict them; but at the same time I must fall back upon my original proposition, that there are decided inconveniences attending a limited income.



AGLAIA. BY CABANEL.

'I feel the well-known breeze, and the sweet hill
Again appears, where rose that beautiful light
Which, while Heaven willed it, met my eyes, then bright
With gladness, but now dimmed with many an ill,'—*Petrarch.*



FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

V.

COPESTAKE, HUGHES, CRAMPTON, & Co.

THE firm above mentioned ranks, we believe, as one of the largest of the City of London, and presents several points of interest, with some of which the general public have already a certain amount of acquaintance. There is no great industrial hero whose fortunes are linked with the firm, no scientific discovery or invention, and its development; no great colony of operatives that has accrued around it and grown into hamlet or borough. None the less the record of such firms has a place in our social history, and will be suggestive to the future historian of the nineteenth century of the rapid noiseless changes which have taken place in the framework and habits of society. In a recent work, Dr. Smiles has told the life of one of the former partners of the firm, a great philanthropist, who, to quote the language on Howard's monument in St. Paul's Cathedral, 'trod an open but unfrequented path to immortality.' Of him and of his good deeds we shall presently say a few words. It was the famous saying of Napoleon's that we are a nation of shopkeepers, and this special firm is connected with the shopping interests to an immense extent. We English people need not be afraid to accept the bad Corsican's reproach. Let such writers as M. Lanfrey expose the 'Napoleonic legend.' He was a man, to use Baron Stein's expression, 'with hell in his heart and chaos

in his head.' His sneer, like Barrère's, is seen to be the best thing which he could give us. Business flowing through a hundred different channels, bringing employment and conferring comfort and well-being, is the great means of consolidating society, just as war unravels what has been gathered up, and destroys what has been built.

The true industrial hero of the firm, if indeed there be one, is not Mr. Moore, but the deceased senior partner of the firm, Mr. Copestake. Partners may come and partners may go, but this name always remains at the head of the firm. This gentleman could only have achieved his position by a rare combination of intellectual and moral gifts. The story of the firm is that of buying and selling, of microscopic profits amounting to immense results. The firm seems to have had a very lowly beginning, and thence to have advanced with sure rapid gradations to a great commercial position. It is this material growth which arrests the imagination of outsiders, and constitutes a kind of poetry in business. If we ask how such businesses are achieved it is simply by the *ἐμπόριον* of the Greeks. It is by the buying and the selling—the buying judiciously, the selling safely. The great means by which such firms succeed is by the system of commercial travellers. George Moore has been called the

Napoleon of his class. Like Carré he organised victory. But of course the strongest commercial traveller must have a reserve of strength. The traveller must be subordinate to his principal. There was an energy and concentration of purpose about the principal partner, an almost fierce industry which is impressive enough. He executed the orders which George Moore obtained, and in this way all these businesses are carried on.

Publicity, as the saying goes, is the soul of business; and this publicity can only be obtained in one or two ways, by advertising or by commercial travelling. The commercial traveller insures the publicity, and achieves a number of essential things besides. The order of commercial travellers has had considerable attraction for many minds. How Dickens and Trollope have delighted in the portraiture of the commercial traveller! Wherever you are journeying, the commercial traveller is sure to turn up. We like him most in the old and most picturesque form, as the driver of a gig. He is a man who is thoroughly familiar with our most secluded scenery and most primitive types of character. There is no man in his way who sees more of scenery and society. He knows nature and human nature. The faculties which go to the formation of a first-rate 'commercial' are those which often make the reputation of the barrister or the actor. He has to persuade the trader to give orders even when his shelves are groaning beneath unproductive stock, and at the same time be quite sure the said shopkeeper is not trading beyond his capital. Every man who goes about must see something of the commercial traveller. He is not bad company in a railway-carriage, and he is

often excellent company in an inn. There is an affectation just now in fine gentlemen calling themselves working men. I see that the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Speaker of the House of Commons have been calling themselves working men. No doubt all of us work, but only a proportion of us belong to the *classe ouvrière*. People would act more wisely and attain practical ends if they called themselves commercial travellers instead of calling themselves working men. It would be an exchange for the good if, instead of the newly-lighted smoking fire and horsehair chairs of the coffee-room of a provincial inn, they could attain to the light, warmth, and snugness of the commercial room. The term is indeed used with a certain elasticity. I know one or two of her Majesty's Inspectors who make a point of asserting themselves to be commercial travellers. A barrister on circuit would be entitled to the name, though he would probably desire to waive the privilege. The variety of character among these gentlemen is very great. I know of a distinguished philosopher, a F.R.S., who, finding that prolonged intellectual work does not suit his health, has taken to the road, and does very respectably in his new vocation. A case transpired some time ago of a clergyman, who was a chaplain to one of the London charities, who, having only Sunday duty, devoted his week-day hours to travelling as a bagman. These men have often a keen intellectual life. Such portraitures as those in *Orley Farm* or in *Green Lanes and Meadow Paths* quite fail to do them justice. Their weak point is the deficiency of knowledge and education; but there is often a peculiar freshness and power which reminds one of the fine talk

which used to go on in sanded inn-parlours in the Johnsonian days of the last century. The faculty of observation is often preternaturally sharpened; there is a frankness and audacity of thought, and frequently an enviable power of expression. The wonder arises how men who get up early and work hard all day can afford to sit up so late and talk so earnestly and so well. There was a great philosopher who acquired vast stores of information on the principle of always talking to a shoemaker about shoes. If the commercial traveller will only talk to you about his special business—which he probably hates, and does not care to discuss out of business hours—the chances are that you will learn something. The chances are, however, that he will degenerate into talking about himself, or about the merits and demerits of his firm. The commercial traveller who has tired out his connection and has outlived his energy has often a sorrowful tale to tell. It must be said, greatly to their credit, that no men have a truer insight into their own social conditions. They have provided schools for their children, and provident societies for their old age. We may be pretty sure of being excused for speaking about a class of men who have made the fortunes of such houses as the Leafs and the Copestakes, and who form an integral part in the system of British commerce.

But let us look at this prince of commercial travellers, who did so much to build up the fortunes of the great house in Bow Churchyard. It will not be necessary to say very much about him, as Dr. Smiles has once for all told the story so effectively. He was only twenty-three when he was so formidable a rival, as a traveller, to

Messrs. Groucock and Copestake that they took him into partnership. We need not follow Dr. Smiles into details in which Mr. Moore did a few things which, as a wiser man or as a more opulent man, he would not have done. He worked hard that he might marry his former master's daughter. Like the fortunate apprentice who became Lord Mayor, he did so. For the matter of that, he might have become Lord Mayor of London himself; he might probably have been member for the City of London, if he had cared for it. 'I believe,' he said, 'that I never could have surmounted the difficulties and hardships which I had to encounter but for the thought of her. I thought of her while going my rounds by day, and I thought of her while travelling by coach at night. The thought of her was my greatest stimulus to exertion.' There is generally a *her* which keeps each man's world of business in its constant cycle and epicycle. Happy the man who has such a pure and genuine love to throw such an iridescent line over his dull pathway, and to save him from the debasement and sensuality of an evil age! Moore worked sixteen or eighteen hours a day. He sat up two nights in the week. He spent his Sundays in balancing his accounts. He must have had a constitution of iron and a front of brass. He considered that every salesman ought to be able to work his sixteen hours a day. At last he saw the necessity of exercise and change. When his health was giving way, he must often have meditated whether the game was worth the candle. He went over to New York for a change; but at New York he of course busied himself in laces. There he met Stewart of the Broadway, the greatest dry-goods merchant in the

world. It would be amusing if one of our industrial biographers were to write a dialogue, after the manner of Walter Savage Landor, between Stewart and Moore. By and by a change came over the spirit of the man's dream. The tender human heart broke through the cerements of business. To use the phrase of his friend Charles Dickens, 'mankind was his business; the dealings of his trade were but as a drop of water in the ocean of his business.' He began to take a living human interest in the hands that he employed. He remembered that they had brains and hearts as well as hands. He came to them as Boaz came to his reapers, saying, 'The Lord bless you!' and there were very many who learned to say, as the reapers did to Boaz, 'The Lord be with you!' He took the deepest interest in his own poor wild country of Northumberland, which learned to bless him through all its length and breadth. He never forgot his own class. When he took his big house in Kensington-park-gardens, his first guests were the young men and the young women in the City, to whom he gave a ball. He was a zealous supporter of all the charities connected with commercial travellers. But his charities were not limited to the circle of his own special affinities. Through his friends, the City Missionaries, he paid the marriage-fees of thousands of persons who ought to have been married, and were not. It was found after his death that he had often spent as much as sixteen thousand a year in charity. It would be wearisome to enumerate the charities to which he contributed. A friend tells the writer that he would often spend whole days in the office writing cheques for the different claimants for charity who presented themselves.

And all the while he unveiled a humble sincere nature. 'I trust that I am beginning to see and feel the folly and vanity of the world and its pleasures. As Newton says, I know what the world can do and what it cannot do. It cannot soothe a wounded conscience like mine, or enable me to feel that I could meet death with comfort. I feel a constant conflict of conscience with inclination, of the desire to do right against the promptings of evil. I feel that I am as unstable as water—poor, weak, and sinful. . . . I have never seen the use of hoarding up money. We may gather riches, but we never know who is to spend them. God preserve me against the sin of covetousness. It is a curse that eats out the heart and dries up the soul of a man.' It is true of many 'a fortune made in business.'

'To him unknown descends the unguarded store,
Or wanders, Heaven-directed, to the poor.'

Mr. Moore was never happier than when he filled his house in town or country with hundreds of his poorer friends. What particularly strikes one about Mr. Moore is, how thoroughly he appreciated the modern spirit—the *Zeit-geist*, as Matthew Arnold calls it. Although he moved in the old religious grooves, in some points he was distinctly in advance of his age. For instance, the great problem in the educational future of the country is how to connect the common schools with the Universities; how to construct a system by which the infant of a parish school may be developed into the University man. In the way in which he dealt with his Cumberland poor, Mr. Moore showed that he had mastered the conditions of this problem. Moreover, he helped many young men

to become clergymen; and when they became clergymen, he still helped them to fight their way through the world. To quote a couplet which Mr. Gladstone has erroneously ascribed to George Herbert,

'Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.'

It is a remarkable fact that in the long-run moral goodness holds its own with intellectual power, and even with genius; fashion and fortune being left nowhere in the race. Had Mr. Moore sought sedulously for fame, he could not have more surely attained it by his course of unselfish abnegation. Having spoken with hearty appreciation of his character, one criticism remains to be stated. A great deal of Mr. Moore's life is derived from his own diary—a diary which, we believe, was intended for publication. A fact of this kind, to a certain extent, vitiates autobiography. The two truest autobiographies in the whole world are respectively the *Confessions of St. Augustine* and the *Confessions of Rousseau*. Otherwise we have learned to suspect all autobiographical literature. They are too uniformly *en bon*, unless by a penitential fit they happen to be altogether *en laid*. But, after allowing for this variable element, enough remains, in this instance, to adorn and consecrate 'a fortune made in business.'

But let us take a glance at this famous place of business. It is popularly called Bow Churchyard, Cheapside. Whether it really is the churchyard identified with 'the great bell of Bow'—a veritable churchyard once sown with 'the cold *hic jacets* of the dead'—is an archeological point which we shall not pause to discuss. It nearly fronts King-street, leading up to the Guildhall, and so is set in the midst of 'streaming Lon-

don's central roar.' The great business house extends from street to street in Cheapside, a range of some twenty houses, so to speak, with the front door of the firm coming out in the middle. Go at any time you like, you are sure to see Bow Churchyard very full. There are at times a whole army of clerks and commercial travellers to be seen. There are Pickford's ponderous wains or those belonging to the firm. It is a great spot for pigeons. There are now whole broods of pigeons to be seen daily in front of the Guildhall, and it is only a short flight here from thence. I suppose they are attracted by the leavings of grain supplied seemingly all day long to the horses which come and go. I am reminded of what I have seen on the Piazzetta of Venice, and what also may now be seen daily in the courtyard of the British Museum.

There is something which is truly imposing, something which gives an idea of the reality and extent of British trade, in contemplating this great mass of building, this hive of industry. To an outsider it is a vast animated machine. It is an intellectual treat to examine this remarkable organisation. All its pulses beat with rhythmic order. Each member of 'this body politic' is connected with each and with the whole. A general air of cheerfulness and brightness seems to belong to the *employés*. Each warehouseman, clerk, and commercial traveller identifies his own interests with the progress and repute of the firm. Each commercial traveller, as he hands in his initialed order, knows that it is something to his account. Each knows that he has his definite chances of appreciation and promotion. People may have lived in London for years, and not have realised how great a Lon-

don sight may be found in 'a house of business.' Every day hundreds sit down to dine in the great dining-hall. The place has its library and reading-room. It has, or at least it had at one time, its own chaplain, and some of the greatest divines and orators of the country have 'held forth' to the young people. This firm has indeed given extraordinary proofs of its regard and affection for its working members. Mr. Moore writes in his diary: 'I am proceeding to make large presents to each of our *employés* who has lived above five years in our service. I have long wished to do this, and Mr. Copestake' (the son of his old partner) 'willingly joins me in giving away between thirty-five and forty thousand pounds out of our private moneys to our old servants. They have done much by their industry and probity to enable us to do so.' We have never heard of any more princely act on the part of any of our merchants. Moore regularly had young men from the Bow Churchyard place of business to his home in the Lake country, and took them over the falls and mountains—a kindly tradition still preserved by some members of the firm. There is none of that overwork and late hours which in so many London houses are ruinous to the health and happiness of the young. The labour seems light, and the hours of labour easy. We are not surprised that something of the idea of feudality has grown up in that part of the modern system of things which might be thought most diverse to the feudal system.

This great palace of trade is not self-contained. It is but the centre of a vast invisible circle. It is the heart with a whole system of veins and arteries, or, to change the image, a huge tree

with infinite ramifications. We do not enter into statistics and detail, but convey our general impression 'how it strikes a visitor.' In this trade, as in all other trades, there is the constant effort to systematise, to abbreviate processes, to save intermediate profits, to be manufacturers as well as sellers. We know firms, for instance, which have their own sheep-farms, work up their own material, and transport it in their own ships. Now in the case of this great firm the original idea is lace. Of course the firm will buy lace, but it also manufactures its own lace in Nottingham. They have several manufactories in London. Then the business extends into all sorts of departments. At the recent Paris Exhibition all the world was enabled to admire the rich goods sent forth by the firm. All kinds of dry goods are to be found here: curtains and collars, shirtings, umbrellas, ornaments fit for a jeweller's shop, ostrich feathers; to the uninitiated a wild confusion of useful and beautiful things. One thing especially struck me. We hear a great deal at the present day of the want of technical education, of an absence of the art of design. It appeared to me that the reproach could not be levelled at this firm. There seemed to me to be a great variety of beauty and design. Goods were brought here from the marts of all nations; from the laces of the neighbouring Low Countries to the far-off lands of China and Japan. These again are distributed over all seas to all havens. The firm has a great many houses of business. Thus they have a house at Brighton, others at Paris, Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Plymouth, Bristol, Norwich, Portsea, Glasgow, Dublin, and so on. All the heavy costs of the transference of stock are

avoided. Thus such a house dominates in many directions through various trades. There is practically no limit to the extension of such a business in the new *dépôts* that may be opened, or the fresh departments that may be taken up. The great point of departure of renewed success was when Mr. Moore had returned from America and set up the lace-mill at Nottingham, giving employment to several hundred hands. Then the firm 'pulled down their barns and built greater.' The former moderate buildings expanded into the present large block of buildings. Mr. Moore was once or twice requested to stand as a candidate for Nottingham, which probably will always be the headquarters of the lace business. We wonder how far there is any connection between lace and Liberalism, and how far the Nottingham 'lambs' are identified with those frail and beautiful fabrics. The present writer was once requested by a great society to deliver a lecture in the town of Nottingham. The subject was a somewhat difficult one, which had failed to gather large audiences in fashionable watering-places. There was a crowded meeting; he was heard with a gratifying degree of attention; and there was afterwards a discussion, mainly among working people, marked by great freshness and ability, such as his Nottingham friends assured him was characteristic of the place. A sturdy independent character belongs to these Nottingham lace-makers; and one would be glad to know that here at least there is a freedom from the fear of strikes, and that kindly relationships exist between masters and men.

As you go over the house there is one circumstance which strikes you with peculiar interest. You observe in one of the upper stories

a bust of John Milton. A portion of this vast range of buildings covers the site of the house where John Milton was born. I remember that the Norwich philosopher, Sir Thomas Brown, who says his life was not a life, but a miracle of thirty years, was also born in Cheapside. One is pleased to see in this busy haunt of commerce a recognition and memorial of our great national poet. I should be glad to see more of a combination between 'fortunes made in business' and the fortunes of literature, science, and art. There have been signs and seasons when intellectual and industrial pursuits have been closely united. Such was the time when Sir Thomas Gresham founded his professorship, and Sir Thomas White the latest of Oxford colleges, before Keble rose. In the commerce of this country these merchants are princes; and while it is something to relieve want, it is also something to promote industry. If it is much to promote religion and philanthropy, surely it is much also to be identified with politics and history, song and story, with literature and art. I confess I was mightily pleased with this bust of Milton. It took my fancy hugely. I suppose there is hardly any other business place in London which has such an association. After all, Milton will be remembered when even Moore is forgotten. What a contrast there is between all the suggestions of modern luxury which we find in this crowded place of business, and the 'plain living and high thinking' of the great poet and politician of the Puritan domination! For a moment, amid the rapid noiseless movements, amid the blaze of colour, amid the concourse of people, the mind travelled back to traffickers—the honourable of

the earth. In the great Italian cities of the Middle Ages there was such a combination. The great merchants have embalmed their memories in galleries and palaces, in statues and pictures, in the pages of poets and historians. When we speak of fortunes made in business one would rejoice in hearing of such fortunes consecrated to beneficent exalted ends, giving grace and stability to our institutions, achieving a worthy immortality for our merchant princes. In the case of the remarkable house which we are considering, we have seen that there has been one individual who has earned his niche in the history of London by a career of philanthropy which has few parallels. We should like to see something more in modern business to recall the old Miltonian era. It almost seemed for the moment, glancing at the bust, that the sweet sounds of that old renowned organ sounded in the spiritual ear, the organ sound also of the *periodus oratoria* of that massive Latin and English prose, the consummate music of his sonnets, lyrics, or heroic lines. The association was momentary, the illusion as brief as it was brilliant.

That old house vanished in the Great Fire. That old court which led up to it has been built over by the modern premises. But we feel sure that there is something sound in the association of ideas. There is something happy in this fortuitous connection between genius and business that suggests more of union between commerce and art, and that our merchant princes might in some degree resemble those of Florence and Venice.

It is unnecessary to speak of the *personæ* of the firm, gentlemen who help worthily to maintain the credit of the good City of London. Mr. Groucock, who originally founded it, has his name no longer represented. The Moore interest has also disappeared. Mr. Crampton is just deceased, leaving a son to occupy his place. The name of the head of the firm is still maintained. The gentleman who represents it is a barrister who, under the tuition of the well-known Rev. Mr. Wilkinson of Christ's, took mathematical honours at Cambridge, and has himself exhibited such a remarkable genius for industrial pursuits that he might properly obtain a chapter for himself.

VI.

JOHN LIEBIG, THE KING OF BOHEMIAN INDUSTRY.

IN north-eastern Bohemia lies the small county of Braunau, surrounded by moderately high mountains. Its German population took possession of it many centuries ago, and is still distinguished by peculiar customs and costumes. In the centre of the valley, on the slope of a mountain and on the right bank of the small river Steine, there stands a Benedictine abbey. Its red-tiled roofs are seen from afar, and around it

are grouped houses of modest pretensions, and inhabited by about four thousand persons. This is the cloth-manufacturing town of Braunau, famous for the zeal it once displayed in the cause of the Reformation, by numerous fires which repeatedly almost entirely destroyed it, and frequently referred to at the present day as the native place of John Liebig, the greatest of Bohemian 'Lords of Industry.'

The first cloth-weavers settled at Braunau in the thirteenth century, at the invitation of Martin, the then abbot of the Benedictines. The most flourishing period of the Braunau cloth-manufacture was evidently when the red cloths of the town were famous throughout Europe, their reputation extending far into Turkey. It is only within recent times that this whilom celebrated article of export has partly lost its importance. The causes of this were various, but perhaps the most active was the remodelling of the Turkish army, and clothing it in uniforms after the European pattern, which rendered red cloths no longer necessary for that purpose.

In consequence of this, many of the cloth-weaving families were impoverished; the Liebig, who were settled at Braunau long before the seventeenth century, were one of those families who thus suffered.

To this day they show a particularly poor-looking wooden house close to the palatial Benedictine abbey, that owns the domain of Braunau. This mean dwelling formed the sole possession of a cloth-weaver's family, consisting of father, mother, daughter, and two sons, the younger of whom, John, was born in June 1802. After a short attendance at an elementary school, the boy was apprenticed to a cloth-maker. He anxiously looked forward to the expiry of his four years' apprenticeship, first, because the ambitious youth chafed at the narrow business boundaries his native place presented to his aspiring mind; secondly, because he had no taste for the trade forced upon him; and thirdly, because his mother having, after his father's death, married a surgeon, living at home had become somewhat unpleasant.

The chief seat of the Bohemian

cloth manufacture is Reichenberg, in the district Bunzlau. Thither John, after bidding farewell to his friends, bent his steps. But his intention was not so much to look for work there as to discover a sphere of action, which the trade he disliked so much could not offer him. He was, however, not successful at first, and to maintain himself was compelled to stick to cloth-weaving a few years more. He felt miserable at the loom, which in those days, on account of the width of the cloth, had to be worked by two men; nor did his fellow-workmen like him, and they complained of his idleness, which in reality was a thorough dislike for his occupation. It became apparent that activity was his real life-element as soon as he had saved enough money to buy a small assortment of pedlar's wares, such as braces, ties, brushes, pipes, &c., with which he visited well-frequented inns and taverns. He was now in the right current. Soon after he effected a very successful speculation in ladies' treasures made of silk, which had then become the fashion, proving how active and indefatigable John could be, in seizing the chance of a profitable undertaking, and in carrying it out promptly and energetically.

In the mean time his elder brother Francis and his sister Pauline had come to Reichenberg. John readily accepted their proposal to join them in opening a draper's shop, and at the same time, to make the attempt, by hiring a few looms, to manufacture certain silk goods. In both departments John reserved to himself the management of all business transactions, his brother attending to the manufacturing and internal concerns of the business. Even then John displayed great talents for management and organisation; talents,

which, as we shall see by and by, led to unusual results.

In the year 1828, partly accident, and partly the practical glance of the man, laid the foundation stone of his subsequent industrial preëminence.

In the year 1806 Christian Christopher, Count Clam-Gallas, the father of the subsequent owner of the domain of Reichenberg, had established in a one-storied building, surrounded by swampy meadows and impassable woods in the neighbourhood of Reichenberg, a cotton mill, and works for dyeing wool. This primitive establishment, in spite of high patronage and government protection, did not pay; it passed into the hands of a citizen of Reichenberg, who carried it on for twenty years; finally it was turned into a calico factory. In 1828 the establishment fell under the hammer. The brothers Liebig bought it: a one-storied building with a small yard, a water-wheel of four-horse power, and a small dwelling-house—such was the factory. John, in purchasing it, had the intention of establishing on this spot an entirely new branch of industry, viz. the manufacture of merino, camlet, and lasting; truly so extensive a project that the elder brother preferred leaving its difficult and dangerous execution to the more daring John. Consequently they dissolved partnership, and Francis devoted himself to the drapery business, which was doing well.

John Liebig's speculation prospered under his active and careful management. In 1832 the premises had to be enlarged, and calendering and printing works were erected; three years later on, in 1835, steam-dyeing works, and eventually in 1844, after a terrible fire, a warping mill.

In 1845 John made prepara-

tions on a large scale for the manufacture of orleans and mohair, and in the same year erected a warehouse three stories high, to which was attached an imposing dwelling-house, which also contained the offices and packing-rooms. Thanks to the exertions of Liebig, the road across the Giants' Mountains (*Riesengebirge*) was constructed, which of course largely benefited his business, so much so that in 1849 there were already 800 looms, after the English pattern, at work; extensive printing works were established in 1850, a worsted mill was built in 1851, in 1854 a gas factory to supply the 2500 lights required about the works, and finally in 1855 an enormous warehouse, of great height, for the storing of woollen goods.

It will thus be seen that the desolate cotton-mill in the marshy valley has grown by the energy of one man into a large and flourishing establishment, a village or small town of itself. The number of hands employed amounts to more than 2000; the motors are upwards of 900 horse power; the annual consumption of coal amounts to about 8000 tons, besides large quantities of wood; the annual value of the produce exceeds two and half millions of florins. Dyeing works at Nussdorf, near Vienna, form an appendage to the chief establishment.

But John Liebig's activity and enterprise did not stop even there. It is one of the distinguishing features of his mental acuteness to discover localities where treasures of as yet unappropriated natural power lie hidden. At Svarov (district Tannwald) the current of the river Deese, there increased by the rapid Kamenitz, together with a population needing work, offered opportunities

for carrying out extensive projects. Scarcely had Liebig arrived at this conclusion when he in 1844 erected cotton and worsted mills. Five years after, a building at Haratitz, on the same river, was turned into a cotton and twist factory, with upwards of 400 looms and more than 1600 hands. But still those two mills did not supply the works at Reichenberg with the quantity of yarn they were craving for; hence a third mill on a large scale was erected at Eisenbrod, situate on the rapid Iser, rushing down from the Giants' Mountains. Since the erection of the factory, the town, which was fast decaying, has been greatly improved. In the factory 400 hands find occupation.

After having done so much, John Liebig might have been supposed to be entitled to repose. But his ever-active mind could not rest. Though the textile manufacture may be considered as his principal occupation, he did not confine himself to it, but drew a number of profitable pursuits within the sphere of his already widely extended operations. His attention was directed to Hungary. There the soil has as yet a grand future before it, awaiting only the labourers; and only foreign, mostly German, immigrants called forth the beginnings of a remunerative industry in the country, rich in wood and water-power, coal, precious and other metals, wine, fruit, and cereals. Liebig had noticed the successes of the Bohemian glass manufacture, and determined to transplant them on Hungarian soil. Certainly extraordinary difficulties had to be overcome, difficulties which might have checked a bolder spirit than his. True, in the Carpathian valley on the frontiers of Siebenbürgen, which is traversed by the Bistritz, he had

for a moderate sum acquired a handsome territory with extensive beech-woods, but two conditions had to be satisfied before the decayed glass-factory could be made to pay—men and roads. Both were provided. German workmen, glass-blowers and others, settled there with their families, and quickly (in 1851) there arose the village of Schwarzwald, with its saw-mill, flour-mill, glass-works and grinding shops, together with the cheerful dwellings of the officials and workmen, altogether about 500 hands. But this industrial colony seemed entirely shut out from the world by high and pathless mountains; and as long as the goods manufactured there had to be exported by slow caravans of lumbering wagons and carts, there could be but small profits. Liebig determined himself to construct a good road, which he did at an expense of 150,000 florins. It was twelve and a half miles long, with no less than eighty-four stone bridges. The outlay for founding and developing the colony of Schwarzwald was thus increased to 800,000 florins; the value of the glass annually produced amounts to about 100,000 florins.

But the wonderfully active man also utilised the internal treasures of the earth. In 1862 he purchased the slate quarries of Ratschitz near Eisenbrod, giving employment all the year round to from two to three hundred hands, slates to the value of about 40,000 florins being annually sold. At the same time he erected in the vicinity two lime-kilns, yielding about the same amount per annum. In 1863 he acquired by purchase the copper-mine of Rochlitz, which, having been abandoned as unproductive by its former owners, began to yield profit in Liebig's hands. From

one hundred weight of copper half an ounce of silver is extracted. The annual value of the copper ore amounts to about 15,000 florins, and that of the silver to about 18,000 florins. Liebig further possesses at Guttenstein, in Lower Austria, a copper rolling mill, whose products are sent as far as Italy and Asia Minor; and to all these establishments, all the property of, and managed till within the last few years by, one man, we must further add the following: a flour-mill at Haratitz, an extensive bakery, a brewery on the domain of Smirschitz, a saw-mill, and a looking-glass factory at Elisenthal in Bohemia!

Surely there are few lords of industry who can rival John Liebig's many-sided and grand activity. The king of Bohemian industry employs from five to six thousand hands, who receive from him the sum of upwards of one million florins annual wages. But praise beyond that awarded to the successful speculator is due to him. He was one of the first of Bohemian employers on a large scale who, without pressure from without, endeavoured to raise the moral and physical welfare of his workmen by means of benevolent institutions. As early as 1842 he laid down the rule that every workman who had been continuously in his employ for one year should, after that period, be entitled to the gratuitous services of the factory surgeon and medicines at his employer's cost. As long as incapacitated from work, he was to receive half his wages, and in case of death a sum of from six to ten florins was allowed to his widow. This involved an expenditure of from ten to seventeen thousand florins per annum, which, however, was amply compensated by the greater zeal with which

the hands performed their work. To abolish the hitherto unsatisfactory methods of cooking and taking their food prevalent among the working people of Reichenberg, and thus to improve their bodily health, Liebig founded large kitchens and eating-houses, in which daily two thousand portions of soup, meat, vegetables, and coffee were sold at very low prices to the hands employed in the factories. The bread came from his own mills and bakeries. But dwellings and mental food also were provided. Having with this view visited the chief English and French manufacturing districts, Liebig established workmen's dwellings, whose number already exceeds forty. Each dwelling cost five thousand florins, and is intended for eight families, whose rent is so small as to yield scarcely two per cent on the outlay. Further anxious for the welfare of his *employés*, and especially that of their children, who are to be the workmen of the future, Liebig erected two schools—one at Svarov and the other at Schwarzwald, each for eighty children; moreover, a Sunday-school at Reichenberg, and at the same place a Children's Home, where Fröbel's method of instruction was adopted. It is a very elegant and cheerful-looking building, surrounded by a large garden.

Such are the performances of a man who in 1828 began the world with almost nothing, and in less than twenty-five years realised a fortune, now reckoned by millions. And his bitterest enemies cannot attribute his success to the favour of the blind goddess of Fortune. It was the outcome of energy, thought, and enterprise; of moderation in prosperity; of the absence of false ambition and ostentatiousness. Ever aiming at the practical,

Liebig saw from the first that two objects were essential to success—the improvement of the means of communication, and greater facilities for the circulation of money. These objects he pursued with unremitting zeal; to their consummation he owes his successes, at the same time rendering such services to his adopted home, Reichenberg, as posterity only will fully appreciate. To him is due the construction of the Reichenberg-Zittau and Löbau railway, which connects those localities with the Saxon lines, as well as the Reichenberg and Pardubitz railway, forming the connecting link with the Vienna line. He hastened the construction of the Giants' Mountains road by at least ten years; as first president of the Reichenberg Chamber of Commerce, he at once raised it to a high state of activity. He was one of the chief promoters of the now flourishing Reichenberg savings-bank; yielding to his urgent representations, the privileged Austrian National Bank, not particularly favourably inclined towards industrial interests, at last condescended to found a branch discount bank at Reichenberg.

Liebig did not escape misfortunes. In 1848 a fire destroyed his weaving factory at Reichenberg; ten years after, a terrible inundation did damage to the amount of many hundred thousands of florins to the works at Reichenberg and Svarov. During the war of 1866 his factories were turned into hospitals, and the battle of Königgrätz was fought on his estates of Smirschitz and Horschenoves.

Envy, which in his case also could not appreciate one of the most prominent of self-made men, has had much fault to find with the *parvenu*; but thinking and

just men have not failed to testify to his real worth. After the London Exhibition of 1862, where he appeared as one of the chief representatives of Austrian industry, he was invested with the order of Franz-Joseph—an acknowledgment of his industrial activity. At the Paris Exhibition of 1867 his merits as a philanthropist and benefactor met with recognition; he received the only prize, which, in the class for Promotion of Popular Welfare, was allotted to Austria, and at the same time the cross of the Legion of Honour. In the previous year, when the Emperor, during his visit to the Bohemian battle-fields, had inspected Liebig's factories at Reichenberg, Liebig had been awarded, 'for his merits in promoting domestic industry,' the cross of the Iron Crown, third class, by which he was raised to the dignity of a baron. But the motto on his coat of arms, *Per laborem ad honorem*, will never allow him to forget that it is not idle repose, but constant activity, that establishes distinguished positions and leads to transcendent success.

The German biographer of Liebig, from whom much of the above is taken, after a review of all that the subject of his memoir has done, exclaims, 'All this was accomplished by the energy of one man within less than forty years. And it was no highly-cultivated intellect, developed and enriched by the study of the industrial and economic systems of the most advanced nations, that created and carried out all this, diffusing physical comfort and mental culture wherever there was scope for industrial enterprise. Simple common sense and an unbending will, self-denial, and an ennobling conviction of the dignity of labour did it all.'

THE GROWTH OF A SUBURB.

IN the rapid development of our material prosperity during the last few decades we have witnessed, in an immense number of cases, the growth of new towns, and of suburbs to old towns. Frequently the suburb has overshadowed the town, and has simply annexed the powerful neighbour to which it once clung as a parasite. In most instances there has been an exodus of the wealthy classes towards the west end of a city, which at one time would resemble a backwood settlement, and eventually becomes covered with gardens and palatial abodes. In Glasgow and Edinburgh the New Town almost dominates the Old Town, and at Liverpool every one who can afford it lives 'across the river.' The greatest examples of suburb-making are of course found in the metropolis. The long arms of London are year by year overtaking the pretty villages that once nestled in its rural neighbourhood. It is to be regretted that no civic edileship has ever controlled the development of our great cities, though sporadic attempts have been made this way, and at the present time the subject receives much more attention than formerly. Something has been gained by picturesqueness in the attempt, though more has been lost both in convenience and magnificence. The way in which the great London suburbs have been developed is very remarkable. Not only have these suburbs been developed, but now other suburbs stretch beyond in endless development. There is no stopping the gigantic progress of

London. Charles I. tried to do so. It is not the least interesting part of the latest and best history of the Stuart period that we see that Charles I. had very enlightened notions respecting the proportion of population to area of space, and had far more regard for sanitary arrangements than has been the case for ages until comparatively recent times. All the fields lying to the back of Buckingham Palace Gardens once belonged to an old farmhouse, and could have been purchased for a mere trifle. One noble lord sent his steward to buy them, but was told by his servant that he could not in conscience pay the sum demanded; a sum for the fee simple which was not a tithe of what is now the annual rent. It fell into the hands of the Grosvenor family, who have been the great suburb-makers of western London. It has unfortunately happened that very few suburbs have been laid out with that regularity with which the Duke of Westminster and Mr. Cubitt have arranged the regions of Pimlico and Belgravia. In many parts of London and other great cities they have grown up in an extremely haphazard way. They have not the unity and splendour of South Kensington or Belgravia, but they long retain a quaint and picturesque character of their own. Here are the old houses of a manorial character which once stood fairly at a distance from the busy town. They have their breadths of park and meadow, their shady avenues, their quaint gardens, their lodges and drives. As you go along the

suburban roads, you meet with antique tumble-down cottages, which curiously contrast with the new villas springing up wherever freehold ground can be secured. The value of land rises immensely in these suburbs, and the grand old houses and the dependent cottages are liable to be speedily swept away. Even Holland Park, the greatest of our metropolitan gems, has suffered, and much of the estate has been let out in 'eligible building sites.' There are still a few London suburbs which have not suffered so much as the rest, Hampstead especially; but all over the country the phenomenon of the growth of new suburbs is to be witnessed. We know of a noble lord who frankly explained to the landlord of a new suburb that he should pay no rent for the first year or two, as he was a desirable tenant, and would help to attract people to the neighbourhood. A consideration of this kind often attracts economical people to a suburb. The rents are moderate, and very frequently the 'half-quarter,' or even more than the half-quarter, is 'given.' This is sometimes by no means so economical as might be supposed. There is a wise proverb to the effect that if you build a house you should first lend it to your enemy, next to your friend, and finally live in it yourself. Brick houses do not always prove water-tight for the first inhabitants. Then again, the expense devolves upon you of laying out the garden. Besides, you find that all kinds of things require to be done in the new house of a new suburb. If you have in addition to pay a doctor's bill you have not really made so very much by your bargain. You begin sorrowfully to meditate on the ancient saw that wise men build houses for fools to live in them.

It is a great thing when the whole plan of the suburb has been carefully elaborated; when terraces and squares, with gardens and ornamental spaces, have been harmoniously constructed. It is a remarkable fact that in laying out an estate it is often found necessary to build a church and a parsonage, and to find a popular parson. There have been instances where the builder and the landowner have guaranteed some elegant clergyman of the Establishment 1000*l.* a year for his income. It is understood that the services are to be musical and fashionable. A chapel soon follows the church, if, indeed, it has not anticipated it. Perhaps in architectural splendour it fully equals its ecclesiastical rival. It is found that these institutions serve as a nucleus to all the ranges of dwellings which gather around them. Soon the suburb is welded into a regular ecclesiastical district, and the ecclesiastical district becomes an independent parish. If any tithes are appropriated from the parent church it becomes a vicarage or rectory. The first-class suburb is soon consolidated into an integral part of London, and presently begins to sling out suburbs of its own. It is curious to watch the gradual formation. A suburb is bright and spick and span when it is really made. But the place has a frightfully scrubby appearance during the course of formation. It is very like chin and lip in the process of growing beard and moustache. The place looks scrubby and scrappy. You are in the immediate vicinity of an enormous brickfield. The brickfield is not a very pleasant prospect for the eye to dwell on, and to most noses its odours are unlovely. Then you trace all around the melancholy conflict of brick and mortar with the reliquary graces of the vanish-

ing country life. If people are wise they will at this stage of development secure large open spaces which will be useful for health and recreation when all the neighbourhood is built over. It is not at all unlikely that some great institution will snatch at a large plot of ground in the immediate vicinity of town at a reasonable rate. You may be pretty certain of a lunatic asylum or two. Other signs and circumstances follow. The omnibus now starts a stage more remote from Charing Cross. Perhaps a tramway, spider-like, extends its iron arms. The directors of the Metropolitan or District Railway devise a new station. A whole crowd of enterprising people who are always on the look-out for 'openings' rush forward. Quite a large number of people procure the business of house-agents. A huge coal-dépôt is sure to be established. A flaring public-house is the point of departure for the omnibus. Then ham-and-beef shops begin to flourish with a rank luxuriance. The long jets of foliated gas project ribbon-like into the streets. An enterprising chemist, who has two

or three shops already, thinks it worth while to establish a new one. A new medical man pitches his tent, and thinks that he will try his chance of building up a practice, since he cannot buy one ready-made. Then the schools are sure to come; the college for young gentlemen, who will wear mortarboards with coloured tassels, and the seminaries for young ladies, which are sometimes not much better than 'adventure' schools.

Such is the growth of a suburb when it has been permitted to grow up of its own accord, unsystematically and without any provision. The process may be witnessed in many parts of London, and in various great cities. If the suburb is destined to prove a fashionable one, the unsightly excrescences are cleared; and that is effected after much delay and expense, which might easily have been avoided in the first instance. It is only in a very few instances that we have anything to compete with those new boulevards and gardens which so many of our countrymen now contemplate with admiring despair in the new quarters of Paris.

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Drawn by J. MAHONEY.]

[Engraved by R. & E. TAYLOR.

THE MISSING DEED.

See 'A Story of Chancery Lane.'



AYLOR.

XUM

THE MISSING DEED.

A Story of Chancery-lane.

CHAPTER I.

‘THREE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD. Lost, a parchment document, being an Indenture of Mortgage, dated the 17th day of February 1845, and made between Henry Fortess of the first part, Ralph Howard and Frederick Pollock of the second part, William Henry Austin and Emily Austin his wife of the third part, and Thomas Burt and Sidney Forrest Dyaart of the fourth part. Whoever shall bring the same to the office of Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd, Solicitors, of No. 99 Bedford-row, shall receive the above reward.’

‘No, Mr. Morpeth; I am sorry to say, no news whatever.’

The speaker was Mr. Sharpe, the senior partner of the firm of Sharpe & Floyd, whose advertisement, as above, had appeared at intervals in all the leading newspapers during nearly six months prior to the date of our story. Mr. Sharpe was seated in his special sanctum, to which none but the more important clients of the firm were admitted. On the opposite side of the table sat a middle-aged gentleman, whose look of eager anxiety and nervous haste was in striking contrast to the placid self-possession of his solicitor. Mr. Morpeth’s impatience scarcely gave him time even to remove his hat or gloves before he broke out with the anxious question, ‘Well, Mr. Sharpe, any news of the missing deed?’ and received the reply above quoted.

‘But, good Heavens! my dear sir, in another fortnight the cause comes on for hearing! What on earth is to be done?’

‘We can apply for an adjournment, if you like; but of course it is only putting off the evil day.’

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You know my opinion about the matter.’

‘That the deed is no longer in existence? I can’t—I *won’t* believe it. At any rate let us make another trial. I would willingly give a thousand pounds if it could only be recovered.’

‘Quite hopeless, my dear sir. You have already increased the reward from one hundred pounds to three. If the deed was still in existence, the holder would have been only too glad to restore it for a fifth part of such a reward. You may make up your mind that it has been destroyed, either purposely or accidentally; I cannot say which, and I don’t like to conjecture; but in any case you may rest assured that the reason it is not produced is, that it is beyond production; in fact, that it no longer exists.’

‘It is all very well for you to talk in that philosophical manner; but how on earth are we to prove our case without it?’

‘It will be uphill-work, I grant; but as our leader, Mr. Brass, told you in consultation last week, the case is by no means hopeless. The deed being lost, and no copy in existence, parol evidence will be admissible. The difficulty is (and it is no use mincing the matter), the evidence in question will be exclusively that of interested parties; and, considering the very large amount that is at stake, that is a point the other side will naturally make the most of.’

‘No doubt they will; that is just what drives me frantic; and you talk of it as calmly as if you

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were discussing the telephone or the last new planet. I know, and you know, that my cause is just and right. To think that I and my poor dear wife, the very soul of honour, should have to stand up in the witness-box, and be insulted with insinuations that we are swearing falsely for the sake of a few thousands. Good God! it makes my blood boil to think of it. I feel almost inclined to say I will give up the whole thing rather than face such a horrible ordeal.'

'Nay, my dear sir,' said Mr. Sharpe, alarmed at the threatened collapse of a promising litigation, 'that would never do. To give in at this stage would be tantamount to an admission, with most people at any rate, that you had had no case all along. No, no; you must try the fortune of war. The first struggle will not be final in any case. If you are beaten, of course you will carry the case to the Court of Appeal; and I know the other side intend to do so, if we should be fortunate enough to get the best of it.'

'A second chapter of torture,' groaned Mr. Morpeth. 'I really believe it will almost kill my wife. I tell you what, Mr. Sharpe, at any rate we will make one more effort. Put in the advertisement again—every day until the trial comes off; and make the reward five hundred pounds.'

Mr. Sharpe shrugged his shoulders.

'It won't make any difference, you may rest assured; but as the reward is not likely to be claimed, it doesn't matter much whether you offer three hundred or five.'

He touched the bell and took up the *Times*, which lay open upon the table. A smart young fellow entered in answer to his summons, and he continued, handing him the paper,

'Here, Halliday, copy out this

advertisement again, but making the reward *five* hundred pounds instead of three; and then take it round to the advertising agent, and ask him to insert it in all the dailies for the next fortnight. We'll try the experiment, at any rate, Mr. Morpeth; but I'm afraid I can't encourage you to hope much from the result.'

'It's a forlorn hope, Mr. Sharpe, I admit, but I won't lose even a shadow of a chance if I can help it. If it only brings back the deed, I shall regard my five hundred pounds as extremely well invested, I can assure you.'

CHAPTER II.

TOM HALLIDAY was copying-clerk and messenger in the office of Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd. He was just two-and-twenty, wrote a capital hand, had a capital appetite, and earned eighteen shillings a week; which till lately had sufficed for his moderate needs. We say till lately; for, some few months previously, Tom had, in a rash moment, fallen in love, which he found to lead him into extravagant outlay in pomatum and neckties, and in various ways to constitute a considerable tax on his modest resources. His sweetheart was the daughter of a worthy widow, who was care-taker, or 'laundress,' of a certain house in Chancery-lane, in which Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd had formerly rented offices. Hence Tom's acquaintance with Mrs. Moyse and her daughter. Bessie Moyse worked as a milliner at a shop in Regent-street; and it was an understood thing that when Tom and she had saved up money enough to furnish two rooms, they were to be married; but as in the course of six months their united savings only amounted to five-and-thirty shil-

lings and some odd coppers, their engagement appeared likely to be rather a long one. On Saturday afternoons the young people were in the habit of taking a long walk together, followed by tea at Chancery-lane—a festive ceremony which was only marred by the presence of uncle Keckwidge, an aged relative who resided with Mrs. Moyse. It was a family tradition that uncle Keckwidge had been rather a fascinating dog in his day; but he was now very infirm, not to say childish. He was very deaf, and, as a rule, understood little or nothing of what was going on around him; but every now and then caught one half of a sentence, and invariably that half which the rest of the company would have preferred that he should not hear. He had further a trying habit of plunging irrelevantly into the conversation, following up some train of thought of his own, very often of an uncomfortable personal character.

The conversation which we have reported between Mr. Morpeth and his solicitor took place on a Saturday. Tom Halliday copied out the advertisement as directed, and duly left it with the agent. By the time he had done this it was three o'clock, and with a light heart he hung up his well-worn office-coat, gave his hat an extra polish, and then started off to a certain tree in the Regent's Park, where he found Bessie Moyse already awaiting him.

After some indescribable proceeding on the part of Tom, which caused Bessie to exclaim, 'Well, I never, sir! And with so many people looking too!' they joined arm in arm, and proceeded to hear the band in the Zoological Gardens. This, however, they did after a manner of their own. They had discovered that the music was equally effect-

ive (and a shilling cheaper) from the outside of the gardens, and, as Tom justly remarked, they didn't want to be bothered with animals, so they promenaded up and down outside the palings to the inspiring strains of the martial music within.

The main topic of conversation, not unnaturally, was Mr. Morpeth's advertisement; and the young people amused themselves by discussing, hypothetically, what use *they* would make of the reward, supposing that they were lucky enough to find the missing deed. Various plans were suggested; but it was finally decided that Bessie should set up a tobacconist's and stationery business, in aid of Tom's legal earnings. At first Tom was rather inclined to undertake the tobacconist's portion of the business himself, as he had an idea that he could serve cigars and vesuvians with considerable artistic finish; but this was overruled by Bessie, who would not hear of his giving up his 'profession.' That idea was therefore abandoned, Tom justly remarking that, as he wasn't at all likely to find the deed, it really wasn't of very much consequence. After a somewhat lengthened stroll, the young couple made their way back to Chancery-lane; Tom purchasing a pint of shrimps on his way, as a contribution to Mrs. Moyse's refreshment arrangements. They found the table spread, a pot of home-made jam and a plate of watercresses shedding lustre on the festive board; the kettle boiling on the hob; and Mrs. Moyse bustling about in the final preparations for tea-making. Uncle Keckwidge sat, with his hat on, in his accustomed place by the fire.

On Mrs. Moyse's first taking possession, some years before, of the housekeeper's apartments in Bedford-row, uncle Keckwidge had

complained of a draught, and had put on his hat as a protection. As the rest of the family did not perceive any draught, and rashly ventured to question its existence, uncle Keckwidge, who could never brook contradiction, became firmly convinced that there was a very severe draught indeed, and had continued to wear his hat indoors as well as out ever since. He had never looked with a very favourable eye on Tom Halliday, and had occasionally caused Bessie considerable embarrassment by uttering aloud private reflections to his prejudice. On the present occasion the first greetings were scarcely over, when uncle Keckwidge, who had been eyeing Tom over in a critical manner, remarked to himself, but quite audibly: 'The idea of a girl like our Bess takin' up with such a pair o' trousers as that. Lor, I believe the women will have anything nowadays;' a remark which caused Tom, though not naturally bashful, to tuck his legs hastily under his chair, and Bessie to look very hot and uncomfortable; Mrs. Moyses making as much clatter as possible with the teacups, and endeavouring to make believe that nobody heard the observation; while uncle Keckwidge continued to munch his bread-and-butter, in profound unconsciousness of having said anything at all offensive. 'You mustn't take any notice of uncle, Tom,' whispered Bessie. 'You know what he is. It's only his fun. He's always taking one off.'

'He needn't take off my trousers, though,' said Tom; and then, finding that he had (quite unintentionally) made a kind of joke, he tried hard to look as if he had said it on purpose.

'Thomas!' said Bessie, pretending to be dreadfully shocked. 'Thomas, I am perfectly ashamed

of you! It would serve you right not to let you have any shrimps.'

'Forgive me this once,' said Tom; 'I'll never do so any more. I wonder whether the old buffer would like a shrimp. Try a monster of the deep, Mr. Keckwidge,' he continued, putting a spoonful on the old man's plate. 'And I shouldn't break my heart if one of 'em got crossways and choked you, you old image!' he added, in a lower tone.

'For shame, sir!' said Bessie; 'a poor harmless old man like that, and you want to choke him!'

'Why couldn't he leave my trousers alone, then?' said Tom, still by no means pacified.

Here uncle Keckwidge, who had been looking about uneasily, as if in search of something, pulled a large black pin out of his necktie, and began digging vigorously at a shrimp as though it were a periwinkle, though apparently without satisfactory result.

'No, uncle,' said Mrs. Moyses, taking the pin away from him; 'not like that. You're thinking of winkles; these are shrimps.' (We grieve to confess that the good lady pronounced the word as 's'rumps'.)

'Then what did he say they was winkles for?' said uncle Keckwidge, much aggrieved.

'I didn't,' said Tom indignantly. 'I never said anything of the sort.'

'Young man,' replied uncle Keckwidge, with dignity, 'you said distinctly winkles; I noticed it particular. I'm very partial to winkles; but shrimps ain't no account.'

'Come, uncle,' said Bessie, 'you know the last time Tom brought winkles you said you preferred shrimps.'

'We ain't had winkles,' resumed the old man, quite ignoring his niece's remark, 'not since that

day when we found the earwig in my Sunday hat. And then they was in a pie!

'No, no, uncle,' said Mrs. Moyse, laughing; 'that wasn't winkles; that was eels.'

'I dunno about that,' said uncle Keckwidge thoughtfully; 'but I know you pick 'em out with a pin. With a pin!' he repeated at intervals, like an echo, fainter and fainter each time. 'With a pin!' And then relapsed into silence.

By way of changing the subject, Tom began to tell Mrs. Moyse how the great case of *Davis v. Morpeth* was expected to come off on Wednesday week, and how the most important title-deed was mysteriously missing, and Mr. Morpeth had offered a reward of five hundred pounds to any one who would restore it.

Uncle Keckwidge brightened up suddenly at the word 'reward.'

'I know,' he said, nodding his head sagely. 'I see the bill myself, at the baker's round the corner. A tarrier-dog with one eye, answers to the name o' Bob. Ten shillin' reward.'

'No, no, uncle,' said Bessie; 'that's not the reward we were talking about. Tom was telling us about a paper that was lost, and the gentleman offers a heap of money to get it back again. Five hundred golden pounds! Only think of that!'

'Five hundred pounds for finding a tarrier-dog,' replied uncle Keckwidge. 'It ain't likely. Not if he was ever such a stunner for rats.'

'I didn't say anything about terrier-dogs, Mr. Keckwidge,' explained Tom. 'I said a deed, Mr. Morpeth's deed.'

'You distinctly said a tarrier-dog, with one eye,' said uncle Keckwidge. 'And as for saying you'll be d—d, that don't alter it. Nor it ain't manners either.'

'I never said anything of the kind!' shouted Tom. 'I said it was a deed that was lost, a parchment document.'

'I said all along it was a dog you meant,' said the old man, only catching the last word of the sentence. 'A tarrier-dog, answers to the name of Bob! Well, you ain't found him, have you?'

Mrs. Moyse and her daughter were so tickled with the old man's mistake and Tom's increasing indignation that it was some time before their laughter would permit them to explain to uncle Keckwidge that it was a valuable paper, and not a dog, that was lost.

'Then why did he come a-telling us stories about tarrier-dogs! I don't believe there ain't been no dog lost at all, there now. And he may put that in his pipe, and smoke it.'

Tom was beginning to get really angry, but Bessie pacified him by squeezing his hand under the table, and whispering,

'Lor, you don't mind uncle, Tom dear. You know he's quite deaf and foolish. He doesn't know half he says.'

'I don't think much of the other half, whichever it may be,' said Tom doubtfully. 'He's never particularly amiable; but this evening he does seem to have his knife into me uncommon.'

'Never mind, dear,' replied Bessie; 'we don't take any notice of what he says, and you mustn't either. Have a little of mother's home-made raspberry jam, and think no more about it. This is the first pot of last year's making, brought out expressly in honour of you.'

'Thank you, ma'am, since you're so pressing, I don't mind if I do,' said Tom, and proceeded to help himself. But scarcely had he taken the first mouthful, when he grew suddenly pale, his lower jaw

dropped, and he remained gazing fixedly at the jam-pot, as if spell-bound.

'Good gracious, Tom!' said Bessie; 'whatever is the matter? Are you ill?'

'Don't say it's a blackbeetle,' said Mrs. Moyse, peering anxiously into the jam-pot. But there was nothing there to cause Tom's emotion.

'No, don't; it's nothing; I shall be all right directly!' gasped Tom. 'It's—it's—the five hundred pounds!'

Mrs. Moyse and Bessie looked at him as if he had taken leave of his senses. Uncle Keckwidge murmured incoherently, 'Five hundred tarrier-dogs with one eye, answers to the name of Bob;' and relapsed into vacancy.

But Tom did not long continue in his momentary condition of bewilderment. He pulled out the rough draft of the advertisement, which was still in his pocket, and began to compare the names of the parties to the deed, as there mentioned, with the piece of parchment which had covered the jam-pot, and which now lay upside down upon the table.

'Ralph Howard and Frederick Pollock. Thomas Burt and Sidney Forrest Dysart. William Henry Austin. Yes, the very names! Mrs. Moyse, I've found the missing deed, or at least a piece of it; and now, if we can trace the rest, our fortune's made!'

'You don't mean that dirty old piece of sheepskin that lay about here for ever so long, and that I took to cover my jam-pots! Good gracious!'

'Mrs. Moyse, that dirty old piece of parchment is worth five hundred pounds! But where's the rest of it? For heaven's sake, don't say it's destroyed!'

'It's all cut up, at any rate,' said Mrs. Moyse, flinging open her cupboard. 'There's two dozen

pots there, and they've each got a piece of it. That pot was the first we've opened. And I rather think'—rummaging in the cupboard—'yes, here it is!—I rather think this is all the rest of it.'

It was an anxious moment. The mutilated parchment was spread out, the pots uncovered, and the circular fragments restored, though with some difficulty, each to its proper place. At last the task was finished. A few of the *and whereas* and *provided also* were slightly sticky, but not the smallest part was missing.

Mrs. Moyse's possession of the deed was very easily accounted for. When Messrs. Sharpe & Floyd had removed from Chancery-lane, a quantity of old papers, which were regarded as out of date and useless, had been swept into a corner for the dustman. The deed in question had, by some accident, got among them; and Mrs. Moyse, observing that it was parchment, and being a careful housekeeper, picked it up and laid it aside for the purpose for which she afterwards used it.

These particulars were communicated to Tom while Bessie brushed his hat and generally got him ready (for excitement had made him quite helpless) to go off to Mr. Sharpe's private house at once to claim the reward. Everybody appeared to have a vague kind of impression that it was all a dream, and that they had better secure the reward before they woke up. With the deed carefully wrapped in paper and in the breast-pocket of his closely-buttoned coat, Tom hurried to Mr. Sharpe's, and, hot and panting, began to tell his story. No sooner, however, had Mr. Sharpe comprehended the main fact that the deed was found, and assured himself of its identity, than he stopped Tom short in his narrative.

'That'll do for the present,' said he; 'you shall tell me the rest as we go to Mr. Morpeth's.'

A hansom was called, and the pair were quickly at Mr. Morpeth's house.

'Is your master in?' inquired Mr. Sharpe.

'Yes, sir,' said the footman; 'but he is just sitting down to dinner.'

'I must see him, notwithstanding,' said Mr. Sharpe. 'Kindly take him my card; tell him my business is urgent.'

The man complied, and a moment later Mr. Morpeth threw open the dining-room door.

'Walk in, Mr. Sharpe. Ah, you have good news! I see it in your face! The deed is found!'

'Yes, sir; I am happy to say it is, and I congratulate you with all my heart; and you too, my dear Mrs. Morpeth,' addressing a fair-faced gentle-looking lady, who was seated at the head of the table.

'It is really found at last, is it?' said she. 'O, what a relief! Then there will be no need for me to appear in that dreadful court?'

'Not the slightest need; indeed, I may almost say that the finding of the deed puts an end to the suit. The plaintiffs haven't a leg to stand upon.'

'But where, when, how, was it found?' inquired Mr. Morpeth.

'Here is the fortunate finder. He had better tell his own story,' said Mr. Sharpe; 'for as soon as I realised that the deed was actually found, I brought him here at once, and I scarcely know the particulars myself.'

Tom told his story, and produced the deed, receiving the heartiest commendation for his intelligence and acuteness.

'Excuse me one moment,' said Mr. Morpeth; and leaving the room, he returned with a cheque, still wet, requesting Messrs. Coutts & Co. to pay to Mr. Thomas

Halliday or order the sum of *five hundred pounds*.

'And now, my friends,' he said, 'sit down and join us at dinner, which you have so agreeably interrupted. For my own part, I feel more inclined to enjoy my dinner than I have for a twelve-month past, though I'm afraid the soup has got cold. Sit down, Sharpe. Will you sit there, Mr. Halliday, and make yourself at home?'

Tom blushed and stammered. 'I thank you kindly, sir; but, if you remember, I've partaken of tea and shrimps already, sir. And if you'll kindly excuse me, I think there's some one might feel hurt; I mean—the truth is—my young lady is waiting for me, and—and I feel so proud and happy with this piece of paper that I sha'n't believe it's real until I've shown it to Bessie, God bless her!'

'Amen, my lad; and if you or she need a friend, you shall find one in me.'

'And in me too,' said Mrs. Morpeth. 'And tell your Bessie I shall come and make her acquaintance very soon.'

Tom and Bessie were married a few months later, Mr. and Mrs. Morpeth both insisting on being present at the ceremony. They had made a great pet of Bessie, and given substantial aid to the young couple in commencing housekeeping, quite apart from the five hundred pounds earned by Tom in connection with the missing deed. Uncle Keckwidge gave the bride away, and has gradually become quite reconciled to Tom, whom he regards as a man of unlimited wealth, acquired (such is still his firm conviction) by his having found and restored to its lawful owner a one-eyed terrier, answering to the name of Bob.

CLUB CAMEOS.

Social Ambition.

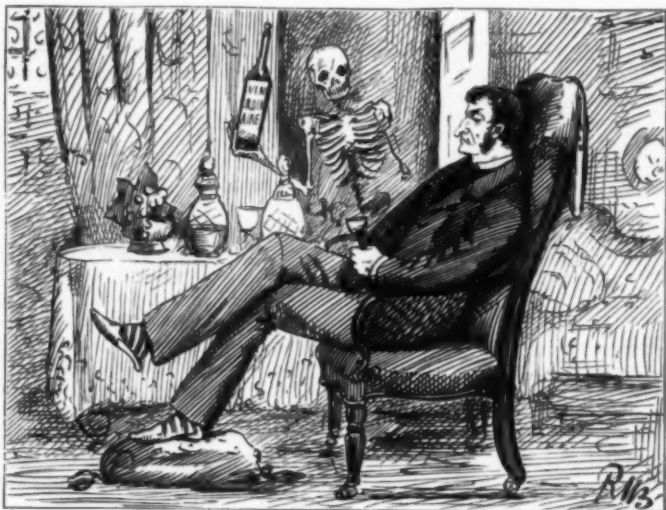
EVER since the days when Horace asked of Mæcenas how it came to pass that no one was satisfied with the position that the gods had placed him in, discontent has been the lot of humanity. What is a source of envy to one man is a source of disappointment to another. Here is a distinguished statesman, whose lofty wisdom has influenced the councils of Cabinets and guided the policy of the State; yet in his heart of hearts he would gladly sacrifice all his past reputation could he but gain a niche in the temple of fame as a great author. There is a gallant soldier, whose broad breast, covered with hardly-won decorations, bears witness to the brilliant services he has rendered his country; yet he is indifferent to the laurels won by his sword, and is only solicitous after those he is never likely to gain by his brush as an artist. A third sees the distance between himself and the woolsack lessening year after year; yet, careless of his name as a splendid lawyer, he aspires after the reputation of a Lovelace, and curses Nature, which has endowed him with brains, for neglecting to adorn his face. Were not Richelieu, Mazarin, Somers, Walpole, far prouder of their conquests in the boudoir than of their victories in the Senate? A fourth has raised himself to a leading position in the republic of letters; yet would he throw all his manuscripts to the wind to be considered a man of fashion. A fifth lends loans to empires, and by a word

of acceptance or refusal can influence the markets of the world; yet all his wealth is powerless to buy what he covets with cravings that can never be satisfied—the blue blood of ancient lineage. Around us we see soldiers who would they were divines, divines who would they were statesmen, lawyers who wish to be artists, philosophers who wish to be men of fashion, peers who would they were demagogues, republicans who would sell their souls for a coronet—men of war, men of science, men of industry, men of idleness—all dissatisfied with their position in life, and longing after the unattainable. The question put to the illustrious descendant of Tuscan kings is as applicable now as then. ‘How is it, Mæcenas,’ asks the genial pagan, ‘that no one lives content with his condition, whether Reason gave it him or Luck threw it in his way, but praises those who have different pursuits?’

Yet is this question only the echo of the cry of the bard-king who had drunk the chalice of life to the very dregs, and found the cup but vanity of vanities, all was vanity. In this best of all possible worlds no one is completely happy, no one is so thoroughly contented with his lot—however brilliant that lot may appear to the outsider—as not to hanker after what he has not. The barrister, up whose staircase solicitors never ascend, no doubt looks upon the illustrious occupier of the woolsack as the happiest and most fortunate of men; yet per-

haps his lordship is a martyr to dyspepsia or the gout, or his wife makes his home-life unbearable, or his eldest son goes to the bad, or there hangs over his head some scandal of the past which he is ever in terror of being made public, or there is some other decoction of the *amari aliquid* which mars the completeness of his enjoyment. However well furnished our houses and ornate their appointments, there exists a skeleton in every

cupboard; and not a tenant but fears, at some time or other, that either he or his guests will hear the rattling of its bones. Conscience makes cowards of us all. We know in what particular apartment of our mansion is suspended that attenuated spectre, and we dread lest it walk down-stairs and expose itself to our disgrace. Perhaps we give ourselves the airs of the choicest Lafitte or of '42 port; how, then, should we like



the skeleton to visit our cellar and show us up as *vin ordinaire* of the thinnest of vintages? Or it may be that we pretend to be as wealthy as our neighbour; how, then, should we approve of that lean monster quitting his retreat, and holding up our banker's book to the world, and revealing our miserable shifts and petty economies to make both ends meet? We say we are as brave as Agamemnon: should we care for the arm of the skeleton to strip the lion's skin from off our shoulders,

and expose us in our true asinine garb? We are religious, and looked up to by the neighbourhood; but have we no stories in the book of our life to which we would rather that that bony finger did not point? We are high born or well connected, and we pretend to intimate relations with certain in the *Peerage* or the *Landed Gentry*; can it, then, be desirable for our cupboard tenant to be let loose, and to disclose those little flaws in our genealogical tree which somewhat rudely disturb the

purity, or perhaps the legitimacy, of our descent? And so each one of us shuts up his peculiar skeleton, stows his bones effectively out of sight and smell, and tries to forget that so ghastly a visitor is in the family. But our precautions are in vain: close as we keep the secret of its prison, not a friend who calls upon us but is perfectly aware of the existence of our disagreeable lodger, and, blind to the fact that we know all about the anatomical remains in *his* closet, pities us accordingly. My good sir, if you wish to preserve anything from the public eye, expose it; conceal it, and it will be criticised, inquired into, and disclosed before you are many hours older.

My friend, little Freddy West, has a secret which he fancies he cleverly conceals from us of the Caravanseraï. He, too, is under the impression that his skeleton is most safely locked up, and that none of his friends have ever heard its bones rattle. The son of a most respectable City tea-merchant (everybody in Mincing-lane knows the firm, Leaf, West, Grounds, & Co.), who has made a large fortune, I am given to understand, out of his dealings with the Chinese in opium, and with the English in bohea, Freddy declines to have any connection with the paternal warehouse. The little impostor scorns trade and all its belongings, and, thanks to manufactured crest and manipulated arms, lays claim to belong to a distinguished Kentish family. When asked by the stranger, in all innocence, whether he is related to the noble house whose armorial bearings he has assumed, he replies quietly, 'Yes, but we are the younger branch;' and drops the subject. In common with so many of his class, he 'double-barrels' his name. His mother, a Miss Farningham,

the daughter of a small country vicar, he was christened Frederick Farningham; and consequently he has now blossomed forth as F. Farningham-West, leaving the uninitiated to imagine, by the adoption of the hyphen, that in his veins is not only the blood of the Wests, but that he will succeed to some of the family property. It has much amused me, when the waiter has written Freddy's name on a bit of paper, and placed it on the table which that young gentleman wishes to secure for dinner, to hear one of the enlightened of the club, on ascertaining who is to be his prandial neighbour, remark, 'O yes, he is one of the Delawarr lot, you know; his father, a younger son, married a Sackville West, had a pot of money with her, and took the name. That young fellow is the heir to a rattling good fortune.' Of such is the accuracy of the world.

Whatever may be the wealth of West *père*, very little of its golden stream will flow into the pockets of the son. Educated at Harrow and afterwards at Oriel, Freddy, after having obtained his degree, declined to sit on a three-legged stool, to pore over ledgers or to look after customers. In an age which sees the sons of some of the first families in the country covet partnerships in good mercantile houses, young West, whose social instincts were strong, felt that he had a soul above commerce, and pined after a prominent position in what his father called 'the West-end.' As he added up the books, examined dock-warrants, or watched the expectorations of the tea-taster, visions of intimacies with men of fashion, of flirtations with high-born dames, of the portals of society opened *à deux battants* before him, revealing all the pleasures and hospitalities of a graceful and refined civilisation,

conjured themselves up before his envious gaze. He wanted to be a 'swell' and to belong to the order. He had nothing in common with business and its surroundings. He hated the loud noisy men, who came into the office with their hats on the side of their heads, who slapped him vigorously on the back and wanted 'to know if

the governor was in.' Careful and fastidious in his dress, he objected to run about the lanes and alleys of the City on mercantile errands, like a bank-clerk. The partners did not come up to his standard of what gentlemen should be; he declined to laugh at their stories whilst he corrected their grammar. His airs and graces so



grievously offended many of the firm's best clients that they went away in anger and took their custom to a rival.

Nor did Freddy attend to the work intrusted to him. He came late and went away early. He read the newspapers instead of the letters. He preferred to lunch at the Caravanserai to the cook-shops patronised by the other partners. He was far more eager

to obtain invitations to dance or dinner than to beat up for customers. In short, he was worse than useless in the firm, and his father had no alternative but to turn him out. Freddy, intent upon exploring the realms of society, had long quitted the paternal villa at Dulwich, and between son and sire there was little love lost. Accordingly the young man found himself the possessor

of the interest on 10,000*l.*, strictly tied up, and with not a hope of obtaining a farthing beyond. His second brother, who had been educated at a City school, and who was perfectly content with suburban life, was taken into partnership, and doubtless will one day develop into a merchant-prince.

Idle, independent, ambitious, Freddy strained all his efforts to get into good society. It was uphill work, and he made little progress. A young man, against whom there is nothing notorious, has several ways at the present day of entering society, should his kith and kin be unable to command the ordinary mode of ingress. A good tenor voice will open the doors of houses which otherwise would be closed. A marked capacity for private theatricals is in itself an introduction to the highest. An amusing talker will generally end by finding his legs under the mahogany in most desirable dining-rooms. Music, comic songs, a talent for getting up cotillons, mimicry, ventriloquism, conjuring, are all means to an end. I know one man who was asked out a good deal simply and solely because he had a name as being a clever designer of monograms, in the days when monograms were the rage. Where he dined he had to design; as another man, where he dines, has to sing, play, amuse, or talk. Society conducts its hospitalities on a very commercial basis. You are welcome because you are noble, illustrious, famous, or wealthy, and thus by your presence reflect credit on your host and hostess. If you are none of these things you are invited because you take the place of the professional singer, musician, or entertainer. There is no obligation on either side. You get your dinners out of society, and society gets its equivalent out of you. But to

the man who has no equivalent to offer, society is the coldest of hosts. And this was the case with Freddy. He had enough to live on with economy, but nothing more. In spite of his sham pedigree the secret of his origin was known to all. He was not musical, he had no voice, he was a bad waltzer, he was not particularly amusing, he could not act, he had no special gifts likely to bear him on their tide to social success. Season after season passes, and he finds himself no nearer to the goal of his ambition than when he started. Yet he employs all the devices of the unadmitted. He knows a good many men, but they do not take him to their houses. He hunted one winter at Melton, and he took a share in a yacht one summer at Cowes; but neither of these moves led to anything. He travels a good deal; but the English he knows abroad drop him when they cross the Channel. He has taken an active part in politics; but though the members whose elections he has been instrumental in obtaining gladly ask him to meet their constituents at a club-dinner, and seek his coöperation on platforms at meetings, these are not exactly the rewards he desires. He has essayed the religious line, in the hope that when in the one world he might scale the boundary-wall and find his way into the other. Yet in vain. He has interested himself in parish-work under the auspices of a fashionable London vicar; he has taught in schools; he has visited the poor; he has asked the curates to dinner; he has subscribed to causes he does not care about, and to missions he never before heard of: but all his energy and hypocrisy have been useless. He was invited to a *conversazione* and a drawing-room meeting or two, but he made no acquaintances. The vicar and the fashionable

district-visitors were charmed to meet him on parochial matters, and to give him a long list of the poor he was to visit ; but they did not consider that an interest in alleviating surrounding distress, however admirable and praiseworthy such feelings might be, necessarily led to social intimacy. 'That game is no go,' said Master Freddy to himself; 'damme, I don't want to know the poor—I want to know the rich.' To us who were somewhat behind the scenes this episode in our little friend's life was very amusing.

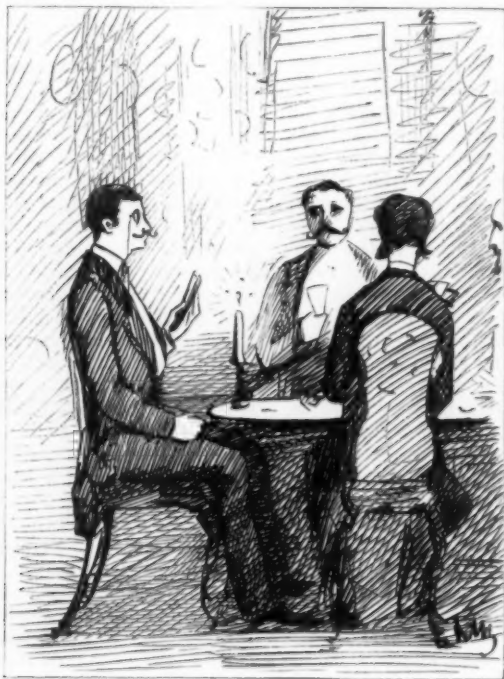
Thus it has happened that the aims Freddy set before him have never been realised. He is still, though on the verge of thirty, to use a favourite word of his, an 'outsider.' In his modest lodgings in Duke-street no invitations arrive of the nature he desires; no well-appointed carriage, with its fair well-dressed occupants, calls for him at the club to take him out for a drive; when he takes his walks abroad it is seldom that he has occasion to lift his hat and make his bow. He hovers between two social spheres, and belongs to neither. He is not of the great world, and he is not of the commercial world. Holding in horror trade, and clinging with such tenacity to the Farningham-West imposition that he ends by almost believing it, he has completely severed himself from his father's friends and relations. On the few occasions when he has put in an appearance at the parental table, he has become livid with suppressed rage at the boorish fashion in which his sire partakes of the dishes he loves, at the vulgar caps and colours his mother wears, at the English spoken by his brothers, and at the want of breeding of his sisters. It is not a happy gathering. The family look upon Freddy as 'a swell,'

and stand in awe of him; whilst West père, hot with drink and sulky, glares at his first-born as if he would like, but dare not, to kick him into the road.

Yet in the whole realms of Pall Mall there is not a more miserable little creature than Freddy. Thanks to his tailor and hatter, a neat figure and an agreeable appearance, he looks like a gentleman; but in his views and sentiments he has little in common with the name. To rank he is prepared to pardon every shortcoming; and so long as men and women are born in the purple, he extenuates every fault and vice they commit. He worships birth and all the surroundings of fashion as only one of the middle class, who is ashamed of the order to which he belongs, can worship them. 'Blood' is to him all what religion is, all what principle is, all what honour, truth, morality are to other men. He does not respect rank as it is only right that it should in this country be respected, but he regards it with the most slavish adulation. If the son of a peer is a knave, or the daughter of a peer hideous, he will find the one honourable and the other a beauty. He detests every class but the one to which he does not belong, and into which he cannot gain admittance. He is indifferent to anything for its own sake; but if an undertaking be encouraged by the peerage, he likes to see his name amongst those who have given a guinea. He is the best of men to visit a fancy bazaar, for a duchess or a countess can wheedle him out of half of his monthly allowance. He seldom plays whist; but when he finds that any 'swells' are in the card-room of the Caravan-serai, he will cut in and be proud to lose his money in such good company. On the slightest en-

couragement he will strike up an acquaintance with men of fashion, and economise for a fortnight to ask them to a dinner, which they never return. Though not in the world, he takes great pains to appear to be of it. He studies all the fashionable newspapers, and makes himself familiar with the movements of those in society.

He knows what receptions are to be held, and what balls and dinners are to be given, during the week. He has learnt his Burke almost by heart, and makes it his business to be familiar with the marriages that are to take place during the season. He knows by sight all the great people in town, and is a very useful man to escort country



cousins to the Opera or the Park. Such people imagine him to be a buck of the first water, for he points out to them the beauties amongst the women and the distinguished amongst the men; and freely, when in their company, takes off his hat to carriages as they drive past, but whose occupants, a keen observer will notice, decline to return the salutation. He casually inquires of these rus-

tics whether they are going to Lady Dash's dance to-night, or to the Duchess of Blank's reception to-morrow; and when they modestly say, 'O dear no; we know no one in London!' he manages to convey the impression to their minds that he of course is amongst the invited.

As he is only happy in the society of those who, as it were, bolster up his social position, he

is the most abject of toadies. If one of the few really great men who belong to the Caravansera enters the club, Freddy will follow him about with his eyes, examine his dress, and watch how he eats, sits down, or reads the newspaper. When the young men of fashion, who belong to that world whose joys he so fiercely covets, hang about the hall in groups before driving out to the houses to which they are invited, he hovers near them and listens to their conversation. How he admires those 'swells,' who talk quite simply and naturally of the great people they know, nor seem to be much impressed by the favours accorded to them! I verily believe, if Mephistopheles would come up and offer Freddy a peerage, and all the advantages attached to it, he would have no difficulty in coming to terms about my little friend's soul. Aware that he is not what he wishes to be and what he pretends to be (it is amusing how jealously he keeps the secret of his commercial origin, and how patent that secret is to all of us!), young West is utterly deficient in self-respect, and in the higher qualities of true manhood. In his heart he feels himself, to use a term of reproach he is rather fond of casting at others, a 'snob'; and as long as he holds the mean views of life he entertains, even were he the son of a duke, he richly deserves the name. Freddy is a snob. He has the tricks of imposition of the anob, the servile admiration of the snob, that mixture of deference for the great and contempt for the lowly only to be found in the snob, and he suffers the needless mental tortures of the anob.

When I see Freddy and listen to his conversation, I cannot help moralising on man's discontent. Here is a young fellow born to what many would envy. He en-

tered upon life under most favourable auspices. For him the anxiety and struggle which fall to the lot of the man who has to make a career did not exist. The family business was already founded; he had only to follow in his father's footsteps to be a wealthy man. He had a home (it might, perhaps, be in better taste, but one cannot have everything) such as only money could furnish and keep up. His family doted upon him until his contemptible affection alienated them from him. He could have had troops of friends to cheer and amuse him. He could have led a happy, manly, and contented life. He had nothing to be ashamed of. His father was an upright honest man, whose good name had never been tarnished by sharp practice or fraudulent proceedings. It was true that he was in trade; and pray, Master Freddy, who is not in trade in these days? The father may have just reason to be ashamed of the son, but certainly not the son of the sire.

Yet Freddy has sacrificed all these advantages for the emptiest of ambitions; he has lost everything and gained nothing. He is nobody. He never will have more than some eight hundred a year. He would like to marry, but he refuses to marry into his father's set, and he has little chance of marrying outside it. He has no friends but those who ridicule him for his failings. His life is passed in sham, hypocrisy, and unhappiness. *Cui bono?* Even from his own point of view he has played his cards badly. Had he humoured his father and been diligent in business there was nothing to prevent him, good-looking and well-mannered, and with Fortune at his back, from working his way, as many have before him, into the society he so warmly admires. As

a member of the great Plutocracy he would have had no occasion to go forth into the highways and byways to find 'friends;' nor, when once the extent of his means was ascertained, need he have despaired of making a bril-

liant alliance. He had a future before him which might have been brilliant, but which certainly would have been comfortable. The future that now stares him in the face is a blank; for let Freddy wish as much as he may,



the portals of the paternal firm are shut against him. Nor will it be long, from what I hear, before the doors of the Dulwich villa will follow the example of the warehouse at Mincing-lane. If ever man gave up the substance to

grasp the shadow, it is F. Farningham-West; and there must be times, I fancy, when he and his skeleton pass many a *mauvais quart d'heure* together. I should not care to be present at those interviews.

THE INTERNAL ECONOMY OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

BY A NAVAL OFFICER.

THE varied duties which her Majesty's ships are obliged to perform, and the requirements of the modern service, make the internal economy of a man-of-war an art in itself, not always successfully carried out because so many new things are added from modern requirements, and, like everything else in the country, life in the royal navy is life at high pressure.

A generation back the arrangements of a man-of-war were of a simple nature: the drilling was not frequent; when it did take place it was more *general* than *particular*, everybody taking part in it; when once the arrangements of the ship were settled, there was nothing more to be done but keep her clean and perform such work as fell to her lot, and she was in consequence, in her time, perfect. But nowadays so much is undertaken, so many things are attempted, few ships are quite successful; and though we believe every one tries to do his best, we think his best is much better than it has any right to be, and it has always been a wonder to us that a general failure to reach what is required is not more startling than it is, and we have wondered, over and over again, at ships being in as good order as we have seen them, and quite understand how those who have had them in charge are content if they can reach a certain modicum of success. But if our readers will follow us through the

weekly and daily life in our ships—that which goes on irrespective of where the ship may be, whether abroad or at home, at sea or in harbour—we think it will be clear to them far too much is undertaken, and therefore nothing is ever completely and thoroughly carried out. We desire to see a man-of-war cleared of much work that can better be done elsewhere, so that the ship might be perfected in such things as can only be done there. These are quite enough in themselves, if done thoroughly; and we believe whatever can be fully prepared for its work in a ship before being sent on board ought to be so prepared: even then every one has his work cut out for him to make the ship fit to take her place in the royal fleet of Great Britain.

The manners and customs of a man-of-war are very peculiar; the royal navy goes back to the days of Henry VIII., and there are now probably many customs that come direct from those times with but slight modifications. Our royal navy still retains more of the past in its inner life than people at all imagine, and yet we doubt if any service has so completely changed as it has done during the present generation. It has changed in ships, officers, and men; in thoughts, feelings, and the performance of its duties: yet there is a vein of the old service—that service on which the whole nation can look back with pride—running

through all, as the single thread of coloured worsted runs through the whole length of every rope in the ships.

'Man-of-war fashion' is a tradition that is always kept sight of in everything that is done, in distinction to the fashion of merchant ships, in which ships, as there are few men, the work is done bit by bit; but royal ships, having plenty of men, always try to make such arrangements that everything, no matter what, is done with rapidity, in perfect silence, and as many things as possible done at the same time, every man having some part of the work assigned to him specially. This feature is brought to bear directly on keeping the ship in fighting order, which means that she is always in fit condition for fighting at any hour of the day or night.

The accustoming a ship's company to work together, so that the full strain of the labour falls on all alike, and the full benefit of each man's strength is obtained, no matter what has to be done, is the great aim; and for this constant teaching is required—each man must be taught first separately, and then with others in small parties. A man-of-war in these days is a big school; teachers and taught are ever at work; and with the number of items that have to be learnt, if a man gets one lesson a week in all the subjects on which he should be perfect, he does very well.

Men-of-war are generally prepared as to their rigging, and many essentials, at the different dockyards; the guns and all stores that will not deteriorate are placed on board; the ship is cleaned and painted, so that when officers are appointed, and the bluejackets and marines drafted, they can go direct on board, and commence their life there at once. In olden

times, the bare hull was given, and the officers and crew had to fit out that hull, rigging the masts and placing everything on board. This had its advantages, for those belonging to ships then had seen them grow, as it were, under their hands, and started with an affection for their handiwork; it was also a good rigging-lesson for every one concerned; but it took three months or so before the ship was fit for sea, the crew being obtained by ones and twos daily. Now, however, that our men serve continuously, they come on board in a body, and in these days we cannot afford to lose so much time, but want our ships to be ready as soon as they are 'in commission'—that is, having an officer in command, who holds a commission from the Lords of the Admiralty.

Officers and men join the ships for which they have been detailed, and are placed as they come on the ships' books—all the officers in a list by themselves, the blue-jackets in one and marines in another—every one having a number, which is retained while belonging to the ship, and is for the purposes of accounts, pay, charges, &c.

The officers come from all parts of the country: the seniors from their homes, where they have been living on half-pay; the juniors from the various ships in which they have been serving. The marines are sent in a body from their head-quarters; the trained seamen gunners come from the gunnery establishments; the stokers and artisans from the steam reserve at the port; the bluejackets proper from the port-admiral's ship; the boys from a training-ship; the servants, cooks, and bandmen are entered individually, in their case undergoing a medical examination; and in a few days the ship,

as far as her crew goes, is practically complete.

The basis of the internal organisation of a man-of-war is a book called the *watch-bill*, and as the men join they are seen and given numbers in this watch-bill, which is also the number of their hammock and, sometimes, their bag. The officer next in seniority to the captain arranges this book; in an ironclad he is the commander, in a smaller vessel the senior or first lieutenant. The watch-bill having been prepared in skeleton, with the stations aloft and different boats placed against the numbers, each man is asked some question, looked at, and straightway fixed in a 'part of the ship.' If, relatively compared with others, he is oldish, he is made a fore-castle-man or quarter-deck-man, stationed on the fore- or main-yard, and put on a launch or pinnace; if relatively middle-aged, he is made a fore- or maintop-man, placed on a topsail-yard, put in either of the above-named boats, or one of the cutters or the captain's galley; if a very smart active-looking man, as a fore- or maintop-man, he is placed on a topgallant-yard, and in no boat at all. The lads are placed in the mizentop or on the royal yards belonging to the other tops, in the cutters or the gigs, that part of the ship and those boats having fewer able seamen, whereas the other parts have comparatively fewer ordinary seamen; the boys are divided over all the parts, and placed in the smallest gig and dingy. The boats' crews are taken from all parts, so that when they are away from the ship the loss of strength is relative and felt equally. Everything in a man-of-war being done by manual labour, this cannot be lost sight of: no one part of the ship should ever be specially drained of its strength for other labour. The marines,

stokers, carpenters, day-men, and band are left together on the watch-bill. Every man in the ship has a number there, the numbers being consecutive, the odd ones belonging to the *starboard watch*, and the even numbers to the *port watch*, the bluejackets wearing a mark on their shoulders, of red braid on their blue frocks, and blue braid on their white frocks, according to their watches. The men of the starboard watch wear this on their *right* shoulder, the men of the port watch on their *left*; the starboard watch always going to the starboard, or right side of the yards, in a boat pulling a starboard or right-side oar; the port watch, in the same way, taking the left side in all they have to do. The 'parts of the ship' are divided into watches, and each watch is split in half, called the first and second halves of the watch; so that in a minor way the watch represents 'all hands,' the men of the odd-numbered half in their watch keeping to the starboard side, and the men of the even-numbered half to the port side. In small ships there are no halves; and, again, in large ships the halves are divided into subdivisions, the first and second subdivisions being in the first half, and the third and fourth in the second half. In this way each part of the ship has men belonging to it of both watches, and in each watch two halves, and in those halves four subdivisions; then every yard has men stationed on it, equally taken from the different halves of the part of the ship in whose charge it is. Every boat, in like manner, has an equal number of men from each watch, but drawn from the different parts of the ship; and in all these arrangements the opposite numbers, such as 25 and 26, 73 and 74, 191 and 192, each in his own watch, has

similar duties, or, if stationed in a boat, will belong to one boat pulling on the same thwart.

A ship's company sleeps, according to its numbers on the watch-bill, from right to left, commencing right forward, the numbers going across the deck in consecutive tiers; the exceptions to this being that the boatswain's mates and the captains of the parts of the ship sleep next to the hatchways, ready to be up in their places quickly. The guard sleep together; the bugler, with his drum and bugle, sleeps close to a sentry; the boys are placed together where there is a sentry. If there is room to be found, such men as are under punishment also sleep together; and, in harbour, the duty-boat's crew always sleep in the same place, with these exceptions—31, 32, 33, and 34, &c., are in a row, that, when 31 and 33 are in the watch on deck, 32 and 34 have more room to sleep in their watch below. As many men as possible are placed in the decks where there is most air, and every available space is taken advantage of; but from 14 to 18 inches is often all that can be allowed each man, and, with every one turned into his hammock, in many places there is a tight pack. It is obvious the numbers must go across the deck; otherwise, if the starboard watch slept the starboard side, and the port watch the port side, the ship would always at night, at sea, have a dead weight one side or the other, to say nothing of this arrangement being better for the sleepers.

The watch-bill being complete, the messes have to be arranged. This is done by the master-at-arms. The men select their messes, but he sees every mess has an equal number belonging to it of each watch, and in each

watch equal numbers of either half, and also that the day-men, &c., are fairly distributed over all the messes. The reason of this is to prevent any great preponderance of one part of the ship, watch, or half of a watch in any mess, that the work of cleaning the place in which they live may press on each man equally.

The men being divided into their parts of the ship, watches, &c., and messes, the stationing at the guns comes next, called the *quarter-bill*. For this purpose, the lieutenant who is specially appointed for gunnery duties sees all the men, and, starting with the seamen gunners, places them as captains and second captains of the guns, putting such of them as are petty officers in these positions first, the remainder taking the most important numbers at the guns. The guns' crews are then filled up according to the men's abilities, as far as can be ascertained, the trained men following the seamen gunners as to places. A proportion of the marines are put to each gun; the marine artillery are placed at one or two guns, under their own officers; and the midshipmen, sub-lieutenants, and lieutenants are detailed to the various batteries, according to their seniority, and the value of the fighting power of the battery. These stations at quarters of the officers give them the men composing the guns' crews as the men of their *divisions*, whose clothes and personal appearance they are responsible for, the lieutenant in charge being always referred to respecting his men, their conduct, and abilities. The men are kept to their watches in the quarter-bill, all the starboard guns having crews belonging to the starboard watch, and the port guns crews of the port-watch; but each gun's crew is composed of men from

different parts of the ship, the men's qualifications within these limits being the guide to their station. The gunner's mates under the gunner are put in charge of the magazine and shell-rooms. Here the day-men are stationed, and also to pass the powder to the powder-men belonging to the guns. A full allowance of stokers is given to the chief-engineer to keep up full steam, and attend to the various auxiliary engines. A strong and useful fire-brigade is selected for the lower parts of the ship, composed of artisans and stokers, with a boatswain's mate, under the charge of a lieutenant and other officers. The best marksmen are selected to go up into the tops with their rifles, as 'top-riflemen' and 'gatling-guns' crew.' A party of seamen is given to the boatswain, called 'riggers,' who are to do their best in replacing what rigging may be shot away in action, or in cutting it away, as may be wanted. Men are stationed to the 'helm' and 'lead,' under the navigating officer; to look out for 'signals,' to carry the wounded below, and to assist the surgeons. There are also arrangements to be made for letting the men know in the magazines what powder is required, what shells have to be fitted, for the firing of the broadsides by electricity, and converging all guns on one spot, and also for the working of torpedoes.

The *fire-bill* is the next point arranged, in case of fire breaking out at any time, and much care and thought are required so as to get at, and use with best effects, all the different pumps with which a ship is supplied, to see that the fire can be localised, all draughts being shut off by the closing of the compartment doors, ventilators, and hatchways, and also that the boats can be got into the water with the utmost rapidity;

for it must be remembered that the largest boats are carried inside the ship, weigh from three to four tons, and are placed one within the other; to get these in the water they have to be hoisted out, entailing some preparation and the use of special tackles. In fire-stations, a watch, the one 'on deck,' as that which is ready, with all the day-men, is generally taken to get 'out boats,' and the 'watch below' is identified in its parts of the ship with the different pumps. A party of the best and oldest seamen and the shipwrights are selected in each watch to form the 'fire party,' under the charge of the third senior officer in the ship; these men have to point the hoses and work at the fire, the rest of their watch manning the pumps. The guard of marines is given ball-cartridges, and placed as armed sentries round the ship, to prevent any person attempting to leave the ship, or put a boat in the water without orders; an extra guard, under a non-commissioned officer, is placed over the spirit-room, the keys of which are placed in the hands of the navigating officer; the stewards muster with the keys of their storerooms; the gunner with his mates, under a lieutenant, prepares for flooding the magazines, every ship having an arrangement for so doing; the carpenter sees the sea-cocks all turned, so as to get a supply of water, and places the caulker to sound the well, that it may be known exactly what water there is in the ship; and the chief-engineer, with stokers and engineer officers, attends to the steam-pumps.

The watch-bill, messing, the quarter-bill, and fire-bill have to be made the moment a ship is put in commission, and with this groundwork laid the work of preparation goes on: the perishable

stores are taken in, the provisions for so many months, the arms got on board, and lastly, when out of the harbour, powder, shot, and shell, and the ship is ready for sea. In the mean time the officers are arranging their messes, the various private stocks of provisions and wines are also coming on board, cabins are being fitted up, and each chief of a department is seeing that everything wanted for it is obtained. The gunnery lieutenant during this time is settling the serving out of the arms, selecting the boarders from the different batteries, and also the landing parties; besides this, seeing to the arrangements for sending the boats away on torpedo service, or fully manned and armed. The boarders are certain numbers from the guns' crews, each battery supplying a division. The landing parties are composed of the small-arm companies, field-piece crews, pioneers, stretcher parties, ammunition guard, and men to take charge of the boats that may be left on the beach as a base of operations; all sorts make up the parties, the bluejackets proper, with the seamen gunners as petty officers, form the companies, with lieutenants, sub-lieutenants, and midshipmen in charge; the artisans are the pioneers; stokers carry the stretchers, the ammunition guard being formed by the lads; and the boats taken care of by the bowmen and a few of the coxswains under a sub-lieutenant.

For torpedo service and the 'manning and arming boats,' care has to be taken to arrange the gear for each boat so that it can be readily found and put in her; for it must be remembered that besides the ordinary crew with their arms the large boats carry a nine-pounder gun with men to work it, a proportion of marines

as riflemen, a carpenter, armourer, and signalman; that every boat, to the smallest, has some marines; also carrying ammunition and provisions, according to the service—for exercise, the full allowance of ammunition, but regarding provisions, only biscuit and water; that all this gear has to be put in the boats quickly, and must therefore be kept in a particular place, and marked in such a way that each boat receives only what belongs to it.

The commander or first lieutenant, as the case may be, has also to settle what 'parts of the ship' are to have charge of the decks and different places about the ship; for in a man-of-war the same men are always taken again and again to do the same work, and always clean the same parts of the different decks day after day; that is to say, the mizentop-men always stow the bread-room; the marines the slop-room; the maintop-men the main and the foretop-men the fore holds; the forecastle-men and quarter-deck-men taking the tiers. And in cleaning the same principle occurs: the forecastle-men and foretop-men take what is in the fore part; the main- and mizentop-men what is aft; the quarter-deck-men and marines having their places; so that after a time the men are accustomed to the place, like to see their work well done, and each time do it better and quicker. Officers are also given charge of the different decks, to which they have to attend all day, but keeping no watch. It is also arranged what days the different halves of the watches are to be specially ready for duty, or, properly speaking, called for duty when the number of men required is so few they will suffice. For this the first halves take the odd days, and the second halves the even days of the month, the four sub-

divisions taking their day in turn. One day it is the first half and the first or second subdivision as the duty half and sub.; the next day it is the second half and the third or fourth subdivision. The cutters take week and week about as duty-boat, during their week of duty the crew being excused watch-keeping. Lastly, the stationing of the men for all work with the masts, yards, and sails has to be made; getting up the masts, crossing the upper yards, bending the sails, getting up the anchor, setting all sail, working ship at sea, reefing, taking in or shifting any sail, either a lot of them together with 'all hands,' or one sail only with the 'watch'; shifting yards, taking in all sail and coming to an anchor, getting the boats in and out, getting out anchors and cables either for the ship itself or for another in distress, and the preparing for action. * Much thought and a good turn for arrangement are required; even then some time passes before all these things go smoothly, and from the beginning of a ship's commission to the end they have continually and repeatedly to be gone through, otherwise by falling into disuse nothing goes right when wanted. The work aloft, when done smartly and well, bears directly on a ship's fighting powers, as it enables her under whatever circumstances to be most quickly ready for action.

Before a ship first goes to sea the different parts of the ship have to be given their look-out posts by day and night, the lifeboats' crews settled—the boats, the cutters that hang outside the ship on each side being prepared for the work, and so fitted they can be got away from the ship, day or night, at a moment's warning. At sea these boats always have in them biscuit and water enough for fourteen men for about three days, which

might be made to last six or seven. They have a rifle and cartridges, slow match, a long light, lantern, and candles, so that should the boat lose the ship—a thing easily done at night—she may be self-supporting for a time, and have the means of attracting attention. The lifeboats' crews in their watch at sea are not allowed to go aloft.

To carry out all these points constant teaching, as we have said, is necessary: exercise aloft must go on; boat-work cannot be dispensed with; the guns' crews must be practised at their guns to enable them to take aim and fire in a ship at sea; all the machinery for electric-firing, lights, and torpedoes has to be exercised to be kept in working order and fit for use; the small-arm companies have to be taught their company-drill, and the battalion should land on convenient occasions; the field-guns' crews have to be taught their drill, to be ready to land with their guns; sword-drill should be learnt by all the bluejackets. So few men in a ship, under present circumstances, are perfect in all points, and so many changes take place amongst officers and men, that the classes under instruction never end. In the first point alone—exercise aloft—every one in the ship, except the excused day-men, takes part; and it can never be brought to too great a pitch of perfection, in our opinion, because it develops qualities which will help in all other points. The boat-work also is invaluable; boats' crews can never know too much of their work; it is work that brings out the genius of a sailor, and must be always taught. In the other points there is a standard which can be, and is, reached in the gunnery establishments, but is in only rare instances reached in a ship while belonging to a squadron or on a station, and, we believe,

never by every one in that ship. Some of the men may reach it—more or fewer, according to the personal interest the captain takes in the matter; but as the standard is reached something else is given up; and in spite of constant classes of instruction, which last the whole commission without cessation, very little ground is made practically; and if our readers will follow us through the weekly and daily routine of a man-of-war, we think we shall be able to show this, and that it is desirable to eliminate some of the teaching from the ships on service, and to let that teaching, necessary as it is, take place under different circumstances.

The daily and weekly routine of men-of-war, whether ironclad, wooden, or composite ships, goes on pretty much the same all over the world, though in hot climates modifications take place; some exercises have to be omitted, because of the sun, or take place during the cool morning or evening hours. We shall relate what is normal, and we will select a temperate climate. First, we will show the daily routine, the main points of which are always considered, and go on at sea or in harbour, fair weather or foul, and to which all other work is made to fit. We will then show the weekly routine of drills and general arrangements, which, it must be remembered, are subordinate; that it must be given up at sea for the necessary work of the ship in proceeding on her way, and in harbour for such things as coaling, refitting, taking in stores and provisions, causing at sea whole forenoons and afternoons to pass without any drill or instruction, and in harbour two or three days on arrival, and at times a week or so. But, when possible, the time in a man-of-war is spent as follows:

DAILY ROUTINE.

- A.M.
 4.30 Watch scrub and wash decks.
 6. 0 Lash up and stow hammocks.
 6.15 Bugle for cooks. Up guard and steerage hammocks.
 6.30 Breakfast.
 7. 0 Quarters; clean guns.
 7.25 Secure guns.
 7.30 Disperse. Watch fall in, clean the wood and bright work; watch below clean the mess-decks.
 7.45 Upper yardmen fall in; officers' call.
 8. 0 Evolutions; colours to be hoisted.
 8.15 Watch below clean the wood and bright work.
 8.30 Hands to dress.
 8.45 Stow bags; clear the mess-decks; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks.
 9. 0 Divisions; prayers; stations; forenoon drills.
 11. 0 Up spirits.
 11.30 Clear up decks.
 11.45 Bugle for cooks.
 12. 0 Dinner.
 P.M.
 12.30 Issue grog.
 1.10 Out pipes.
 1.15 Quarters; clean guns; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks. Disperse; watch fall in; after-noon drills.
 4. 0 Watch fall in; clear up decks.
 4.15 Bugle for cooks.
 4.30 Supper; shift into night-clothing.
 5. 0 Out pipes; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks; clean arms.
 5.10 Inspection; evolution; coil up ropes; up boats.
 7.15 Down guard and steerage hammocks.
 7.25 Petty officers for their lights.
 7.30 Stand by hammocks.
 8.30 Stow bags.
 8.45 Out pipes and lights; cooks of messes clear up the mess-decks.
 9. 0 Rounds.
 9.30 Pipe down.
 10. 0 Out junior officers' lights.
 11. 0 Out wardroom officers' lights.

EVOLUTION ROUTINE.

Monday.

8. 0 Cross royal yards.
 5.20 Down royal yards.

Tuesday.

8. 0 Cross royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant masts.

Wednesday.

8. 0 Up topgallant masts, and cross topgallant and royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant and royal yards.

Thursday.

8. 0 Cross topgallant and royal yards.
 5.20 Down topgallant and royal yards.

Friday.

8. 0 Cross topgallant and royal yards and loose sails.

11. 0 Furl sails.
5.20 Down royal yards.
Saturday.
5.20 Mend the furl of sails.

There is no evolution on Sunday. Should sails be wet they are loosed at 8 o'clock, and if dry furled at 11, or after dinner, or at 5.20. On Wednesday night, in newly-commissioned ships, top-gallant masts are sent down as well as on Tuesday, and on Thursday morning sent up again.

WEEKLY ROUTINE.

- Monday.*
A.M. General exercise aloft.
P.M. Rifle exercise.
6.0 Scrub and wash clothes.
- Tuesday.*
A.M. 4.0 Scrub hammocks on alternate weeks.
A division at gun-drill.
P.M. Boat exercise; rifle-exercise.
- Wednesday.*
A.M. Field-gun exercise; marines at drill.
P.M. Sword-exercise; midshipmen and boys at gun, rifle, or sword exercise.
- Thursday.*
A.M. Landing parties at drill; magazine-exercise.
P.M. Make and mend clothes.
6.0 Scrub and wash clothes.
- Friday.*
A.M. Exercise at general quarters.
P.M. Boat-exercise; scrape masts and booms.
- Saturday.*
Clean ship, boats, guns, &c.

GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Monday. At sea there is no exercise aloft in the forenoon, but a division at gun-exercise instead; this is also the case in harbour whenever 'drill aloft' does not take place. Once a month, after 'drill,' the hammock gautlines are rove, the men's blankets fastened to them, triced up, and the bedding aired; hammocks being lashed up and stowed again after dinner.

Tuesday. On alternate weeks hammocks are scrubbed and hung up to dry; every week clothes are hung up to dry. Stations are

read after divisions, and the evolutions practised in dumb-show. In the afternoon the boat-exercise takes the form of sailing; in a squadron, the steamboats are manoeuvred as a miniature fleet.

Wednesday. Stations are read, and the evolutions acted after divisions. In harbour, when practicable, the field-guns' crews are landed; in a squadron, they will be formed in batteries and drilled together.

Thursday is a mustering day; twice a month the men are mustered as they stand on the ship's books. The first Thursday in every alternate month, the bedding is inspected; the last in every three months there is a general inspection of clothes. Once a quarter the Articles of War are read. On this day any orders, circulars, &c., promulgated for general information are read. Every Thursday the officers of divisions inspect a few men's clothes, taking care each man's clothes have been seen at least once a quarter. All men who are to be advanced are seen by the captain on the last Thursday of each month, and every Thursday requests are made. In the afternoon nothing is done; smoking is allowed to 4 p.m.; the day, in consequence, being known as 'rope-yarn Sunday.'

Friday. General quarters commence at 9.30 and last one hour. Washed-clothes are up to dry. In the afternoon the boat-exercise will be either 'manning and arming,' or 'laying out anchors.' The last Friday evening in the month the fire-stations are exercised.

Saturday. The last Saturday in the month, while the decks are wet, all pumps are tried.

Sunday. As few decks as possible are cleaned. Divisions are at 9.30, the ship and men are inspected by the captain, after which

there is divine service; then nothing is done until after supper, when there are prayers, and sometimes a voluntary evening service. After prayers ropes are coiled up, and boats hoisted as usual.

At sea the routine is just the same, except that supper will be a quarter of an hour earlier, and immediately after 'inspection' there is drill aloft, for at least an hour, except on Sunday. In squadrons, during week-days, there is often half an hour's drill aloft at 11 A.M. and 3 P.M., by which time the forenoon and afternoon gunnery-drills are generally over. Every afternoon, except Sunday, Thursday, and Saturday, at sea or in harbour, some of the younger seamen are exercised aloft, or taught seamanship by a petty officer; on Monday afternoon, the midshipmen are exercised with them.

In this way the days and weeks in a man-of-war go round. General exercise aloft is the preparation for what is necessary to be done in working the ship at sea. To insure regularity and quickness in so doing, much time has to be devoted at drilling the men at their stations, which is done by *dumb drill* on certain mornings: all the different ropes are manned in their consecutive order, the proper men mustered at them, shown where the ropes are to be found, and the road they are to take in running away with them, till at last they can go from rope to rope without being told. In a well-ordered and disciplined man-of-war all the work aloft, and indeed everywhere, goes on in unison and perfect silence; the men run aloft, get on the yards, drop or furl a sail, all together. Not a word is spoken except by the officer who is giving the orders, or, in naval parlance, 'carrying on;' the different officers about the deck and men aloft are only allowed to

make signs for what they want done, but may call out if it is to prevent an accident; the boatswain and his mates use their 'calls;' the bugler stands with his eyes on the officer carrying on, ready to sound 'attention,' when every one remains motionless until 'carry on' is sounded, when the work in hand has to be continued. The spare sails, yards, and masts are kept ready for instant change; the boats carried inside the ship have everything so arranged they may be hoisted out without delay; no rope is allowed to be left slack, and must always be hauled taut and coiled down—that is, put in a circular heap—the moment it is finished with, which is impressed on every one's mind by the following lines:

'He who does a rope belay
Coils it down, and goes away.
Should he be a leading hand,
He leaves it to another man.'

Ships that are carefully prepared and well worked up, commencing slowly, arrive at great rapidity in the performance of work aloft. We know of a ship that has hoisted out her three large boats in a little under five minutes, the first being out in two minutes; and in any average squadron the slow ships would get them out in about fifteen to twenty minutes. It must be remembered these boats pull eighteen oars; one of them is a steamer. When away for fighting service they carry a nine-pounder gun, with all the necessary munitions, the steamer having a complete set of torpedo fittings; and that when H.M.S. Bombay was burnt one of the boats that had been hoisted out had in her some two hundred men, and floated with them; so that it is no light matter to throw them in and out of a ship, as is done. The hoisting in has been performed in five minutes; and it is an evolu-

tion that nowadays compares very favourably with former times.

Sails can be shifted—that is, the one set taken in, sent down on deck from its yard, and the spare one got out from the sail-room, sent up, and set in its place—in from five to fifteen minutes. All sail can be set in from two to five minutes, and taken in and furled in from five to ten minutes. A reef can be taken in a sail in about two minutes; but in very bad weather seven or eight minutes. Masts can be sent down and shifted in from ten to fifteen minutes; and a ship can be prepared for action—which means all light spars sent down from aloft, the bowsprit rigged in, and supports got in the masts ready for ramming—in from four to twenty minutes. In these days the shorter time is that which has actually been reached in various ships.

This exercise aloft develops the men physically, and trains the man-of-war's-man in activity, strength, nerve, and a quick eye, the very essentials for taking part in a sea-fight. In the exercise, brain, eyes, hands, and feet have to work together, all senses and muscles are at full stretch, and the men literally carry their lives in their hands; for there is no evolution aloft without risk to life. Every precaution is taken: the ropes most used are constantly examined; but the emulation is great, the work goes on at racing speed, and now and then scenes occur that can never be forgotten. The result of the exercise aloft is, that when bad weather comes, or there is a sudden call on the ship, or it is necessary to prepare for action, all goes quickly and well. It also brings out the smartest and best men, who are generally the best all round; but it can only be brought to perfection by much

practice and time at sea; and, from the benefit it is to all other points of instruction, we place it in the inner life of the royal navy as second only to discipline.

Though the whole week is mainly taken up with gunnery instruction, on Friday forenoon every one in the ship is at his station for 'action'; the bugle sounds the call, the guns' crews run to their guns and clear them away, dummy cartridges are passed up from the magazine, the torpedo men prepare the torpedoes; all the auxiliary engines are worked, if under steam; riggers, Gatling guns' crews, fire and stretcher parties go to their respective places; the surgeon, with all his assistants, goes to the place appointed for the wounded, and there lay out their paraphernalia; the compartments will be closed and all water-tight doors shut. The moment the bugle sounds to quarters for drill or action every one is silent, and when all the guns are loaded and ready they are so reported to the captain. The lieutenants then drill their respective batteries; imaginary fires will be put out below by the fire-brigade; shells will have their fuses fitted and be passed up to the batteries in dumb-show; rigging will be supposed to be shot away, and will be repaired; masts will be given extra support; tiller-ropes will be shot away and replaced; the fighting-wheel—so called from being in a part of the ship that is best protected—will be used; and all contingencies that can be thought of will be more or less acted. After this has gone on for about twenty minutes there will be a cessation for a minute or two, and then one officer will drill all the batteries and means of offence together; an enemy will be imagined to be first on one side, then on the other; guns will be fired together and

independently; preparation will be made for ramming, torpedoes will be used, the broadsides will be fired by electricity, the Gatling gun will keep up its fire from the top, and all the exertions of a severe action will be passed through.

To prepare and perfect the men for their duties in action, the different batteries are drilled in turn in their watches, and, there is invariably some class under instruction: it may be a whole gun's crew, or a class of men from different guns; but whatever may be the class, the men composing it do nothing of the ordinary work of the ship, with the exception of cleaning it in the mornings; directly after divisions in the forenoon, and dinner in the afternoon, they go to drill, remaining until dinner-time and 4 P.M. There is always a course for such classes to go through, those who pass best at the examination being rated 'trained men.' A man-of-war's-man must be a seaman gunner if anything; it is his business, and he should be *au fait* at everything connected with guns. The rifle, sword, field-gun, company, and battalion drill follow very much in the order in which we put them. The rifle and sword are required for boat-service, the field-gun and the company drill for cases when it is necessary to land and make a raid in an enemy's country, no regular troops being available; but the battalion-drill, though it is sometimes taught, can scarcely be called bluejacket's work, and it is doubtful whether the little time spent on it in a sea-going ship is not time thrown away. We may now add torpedo-exercise, and the care of and fitting of electrical gear for their firing and that of the guns. This will become more general as time goes on, but at present it is in the hands of the

seamen gunners and armourers, who are trained in the Vernon at Portsmouth, and are called 'torpedo-men.' The preparing the ship for action as regards her gear aloft is an essential which is generally gone through the first or last Friday in the month; and from first to last of all that comes under the head of 'general quarters,' it will be found that ship which is the quickest and smartest aloft is sure to be the first in the squadron that can be got ready for action. Once a quarter firing takes place at a target: half the allowance may be fired in harbour; but the rest must be at sea, steaming or sailing round a target. Once a year this firing takes the form of prize-firing, when the ship has to steam round the target at good speed; the range must be about 1200 yards; all guns compete. Precision and time of completing the rounds gain the points. The prize, in money, is divided amongst the gun's crew. Those men whose numbers at the gun show their ability, having contributed mostly to the success, get the largest share of the prize.

The rifle exercise in the afternoon and the drill of the landing parties one forenoon are for the purpose of being able to send a party on shore for warlike operations, to which may be added the instructions of the field-guns' crews. Men-of-war are often called on to land their men, either to complete some work, or to commence it, before regular troops can be sent from home. The party sent will be composed of bluejackets, marines, and field-guns, the latter being dragged by men; and in view of such contingencies, it is necessary the men should at least know company-drill and skirmishing, and the guns' crews be able to land and take their guns over any country.

Marines, having been drilled on shore, and second to no troops, are always ready; but the blue-jackets require constant teaching. Opportunities are taken for a 'manœuvre,' the men assemble in boats at a rendezvous; the beach is cleared by the fire of the boats' guns, the boats being in a line. The signal is made to advance and land, and a dash in takes place: the lightest boats, having on board the company detailed as skirmishers, get in first. The men jump out, fall in, extend, and advance; the remainder fall in; the guns are got out of the boats, mounted on their field-carriages, and landed. A party is left in charge of the boats; flanks are guarded. The party goes inland, attacks some place, which perhaps, early in the morning, has been selected and armed; either takes it, or is beaten back, returning to the boats. Guns are got on board first, then the main body, and lastly the rear guard with a rush, the guns from the boats covering their retreat. This after all is but seldom done. So few places fulfil the requirements to do it for *exercice*—fine weather, no sea, a good beach, a close harbour, and some open country—that it only can be done here and there; the landing of the small-arm men generally taking place at some pier, and ending in a march out and back, headed by the band—about as much use for bluejackets as if they were put in a stable at intervals to groom horses, and in consequence be expected to ride. Some care is taken of the rifle-firing. Once a year every man in the ship goes through a firing course, being landed, and firing at a target. Prizes are given to the best shot in the ship and in the companies. A return is sent home and compiled from every ship in the service, so that a man-

of-war's-man has a chance of fairly understanding and being able to use a rifle.

Sword-exercise teaches what its name implies. A useful exercise for bluejackets in case of boat-work; but we have never felt satisfied with it in a sea-going ship, its lessons appearing to us of a most perfunctory nature.

Boat-exercise is most useful. On the sailing day the launches and cutters of the squadron assemble near the flag-ship, and under the charge of the flag-captain are formed into divisions and subdivisions, and then in columns will manœuvre as a sailing-fleet. The steam-pinnaces will, under some captain or commander, manœuvre as a steam-fleet. Both squadrons will use the same signal-books as the ship, so that it is good teaching for the officers in the boats. On the other boat-day, when it is 'manning and arming,' the boats have to be equipped ready for service, and at the given rendezvous, with all despatch. The same on the 'anchor' day; the anchor and cable have to be put in the boat, and sent to a given place, with all speed. In this way preparation is made to use the boats for service, or to assist a ship in distress on shore. The steam-pinnacle of ships is the torpedo-boat, having special fittings. These have to be in their place once a quarter, by day and by night, the boat leaving the ship. At one of these exercises the electric-battery and fuses are tried by the explosion of 1lb. tins of powder; and once every six months a service torpedo, of 100lbs., has to be exploded. The efficiency, discipline, and cleanliness of a man-of-war can generally be told by the condition of her boats. If the men pull well, are prompt at their work, quiet, orderly, and well dressed, and their

boat is clean, they will most probably be found to belong to a ship that has also these essentials. It seems to follow 'Like ship like boat,' as 'Like father like son.'

The ordinary seamen and boys are instructed daily, whenever the forenoon and afternoon drills cease. They are separated from the rest of the watch, and taught to be seamen either on deck or aloft, as circumstances will permit.

In the matter of dress the flag-ship, by signal, details the dress for the day, and by 9 A.M. every one must be so dressed. On Monday and Friday, for the exercise, it is a 'white working-dress' until the dinner-hour, during which every one changes. The men wash themselves in their messes—those going on deck during the breakfast-hour, the others just before cleaning the mess-decks. At the time the men dress no washing takes place. Washing-places have been and are fitted up in ships, but we do not think sufficient care and attention is paid them. Not that the man-of-war's-man is a dirty man; on the contrary he is, we believe, the cleanest of his class in life; but we think the means he has to keep himself clean might be improved.

We will now follow a man through a week's work, and putting him as a maintop-man in the starboard watch, let him commence with being in 'the watch-on-deck' Monday morning, when he is turned out with the others at 4.30; five minutes after, he falls in, and is reported by the petty officer of his part, the captain of the maintop, as 'present.' He then assists in the scrubbing and washing down of the starboard side of the quarter-deck; when that is done, he will wipe over all the paint and woodwork, polishing any brass that may belong to the particular woodwork to which he

is stationed. At six he stows his hammock, and assists to cover the maintop-men's hammocks, which are those stowed in the starboard quarter-deck netting; at 6.30 he goes to his mess for breakfast, finding all the cocoa standing in basins on the table, with a pile of biscuit or bread, as the case may be. Breakfast, including a smoke, is finished by seven, when our man goes to his quarters, polishes his gun, and cleans some particular part of the machinery. At half-past seven he leaves his gun, and, belonging now to the 'watch below,' goes to his mess, washes himself, and, it being his half of the watch to clean the lower parts of the ship, he goes with the first half of the maintop-men to clean the maintop-men's side of a compartment, or perhaps the whole of a compartment. At a quarter-past eight he will clean and polish the wood and bright work of this compartment; and at 8.30 he will take his bag up to his mess and dress himself; taking his bag below at 8.45, stowing it, and, being one of the duty sub. for the day, remains down to stow all the bags as the other men bring them down; then sweeping up and leaving the place fit for inspection. At nine our man goes to his division, and is there inspected by his officer; after prayers, if in harbour, he waits about till 9.30 for the exercise aloft, which lasts until 10.45, when he has to get up the 'hammock gaulines,' they being up and along the deck ready for use, he gets his hammock, unlashes it, puts the bed up in the rigging, makes his blanket fast to the gauline, which is triced up and hauled out taut, the business being over about 11.30, when our man can go below. Should the ship, however, be at sea, or there is no sail-drill, our man would go below as

soon as the prayers were over and the 'watch called.' At twelve our man has his dinner, his grog at 12.30, and he can smoke until ten minutes past one; if there has been 'drill,' during this time he puts on the dress for the day. At a quarter-past one our man again goes to his gun for a few minutes, while the ship is cleared up after dinner; when that has been done he has to get his hammock and blanket, lash them up, stow them, and trice the gautlines up again. Our man now belongs to the 'watch on deck,' is mustered, and then, with most of the others in the watch, is put to rifle-drill for an hour; after which he has to do any little fitting required for the maintop until four o'clock, when, being relieved, he can go to his mess. At 4.30 our man has his supper, during which time he must change into night clothing. At five he has to clean his arms, and after inspection he, as one of the watch below, gets the 'washing water' for his mess, sorts out the clothes he intends to wash, taking them with the water to some favourite spot on deck. At six, as our man again becomes one of 'the watch,' he may have to hoist up certain boats; but when not wanted can smoke, and scrub and wash his clothes. At 7.30 our man takes down his hammock, then hauls over the hammock-cloths, ceasing his washing at eight o'clock, placing the washing-tub with the clothes in it in a certain place, and going below or smoking as it suits him. At 8.30, being a 'bag-stower,' he will have to see all the bags in his compartment stowed; beyond that he can stay up until 9.30, when he must go to his hammock.

Tuesday morning the work begins at four, and our man, lashing up and stowing his hammock, has then to scrub the dirty hammock

of the previous fortnight's wear. At 5.30 he puts it and the clothes washed over-night on the lines, trices them up, and gets them out taut; his special work after the gautlines, being the maintop-men's lines, the starboard side. Breakfast at the usual time, during which, however, he washes himself; after breakfast all the decks are scrubbed at the same time, and our man, belonging to 'the watch,' again scrubs, &c., the starboard side of the quarter-deck. At eight the watch all cease for the evolution, going on with their work when it is over. At 8.30 on this morning the guns are cleaned; the men dressing at nine; and divisions, with prayers, stations, &c., being at 9.30. As the starboard battery, to which our man belongs, is for drill, one hour at least of the forenoon will be taken up with gun-drill; after that little jobs will be done until 11.30, when the decks are cleared up.

When the ship is cleared up after dinner, the scrubbed hammocks and clothes will be taken in, and one man belonging to the 'watch below' will have to make up and store away the gautlines and clothes-lines. When that is done he will be left to himself until four o'clock. At four o'clock he will be mustered, and assist in clearing up the decks; after supper, and the inspection of his scrubbed hammock by the officer of his division, our man—an upper-yard man—will go up aloft to send down the maintopgallant yard and the maintopgallant mast. This being done, he will assist to clear up the ship, coiling up ropes, hoisting up boats, &c., until six o'clock, when he will be relieved, and have the evening to himself.

Wednesday morning will see our man going through the same routine as he did on Monday morn-

ing, cleaning the upper decks before breakfast and the lower decks after breakfast; but this morning it is the turn of his half of the watch below to clean the messes. He and his messmates clean their mess and the deck belonging to it. At five minutes to eight every one goes on deck for the evolution—our man, as an upper-yardman of the watch below, going to a particular station. When this is over he returns to his mess, finishes it, and, being 'cook of the mess' for the day, remains there when it is inspected, between a quarter to nine and nine. After divisions, prayers, and stations, if not one of a field-gun's crew, our man will be left to himself for the forenoon, except at eleven, when he assists to get up the day's allowance of spirits; and at 11.45, when he goes to the galley to get his mess's dinner, which he cuts up and portions out ready for twelve o'clock; but if one of the field-gun's crew, he will have an hour's instruction on board, or if landed, will not be back and on board until nearly twelve. At 12.30 he goes to the grog-tub for the mess's grog, divides that out, and assists to wash up the plates and basins used during the meal. After dinner and quarters he belongs to the 'watch,' and gets an hour's sword-exercise; then, till four o'clock, being at odd jobs. At four he goes below, and at 4.15 to the galley for the mess's tea, which he divides out, after the meal washing up the basins. Then as usual comes the cleaning arms, inspection, and the evolution, after which he is not wanted till six; and at six, becoming one of the 'watch,' finishes up any of the clearing up, or hoisting up boats, not done. At 8.45 he will clear up his mess, and remain in it while the rounds go, being responsible it is quite correct.

Thursday morning, our man does not turn out till six, stows his hammock, has his breakfast, and, after the guns are cleaned, belonging to the watch, polishes the upper-deck wood and bright work. At 8.45 he is mustered, perhaps questioned as to his duty; and at eight is aloft, crossing the maintopgallant yard, remaining up till the yards are squared. After dressing himself, going to his division, and prayers, or prayers and muster, as the case may be, our man, if belonging to one of the small-arm companies, is drilled for an hour; if landed for drill he gets back to the ship in time for dinner. Thursday afternoon nothing is done; but at four our man again, as one of the watch, is mustered, and performs all the usual four to six work. Gun-gear is cleaned after supper instead of the arms, and our man will polish and show for inspection some of the gear of his gun. He then goes aloft to take his part in the evolution. At six he can scrub and wash his clothes, if he requires to do so; and at eight, if one of the duty-half of the watch, will have to dry up the washing-place.

Friday morning sees our man out at four, to hang up the clothes he may have washed, tricing up the lines, and then scrubbing the upper decks and the mess decks, as on Monday and Wednesday. This morning it is his turn at the compartments. At eight he comes up as usual for the evolution, dresses himself, stows his bag, and goes up off the lower decks. At nine divisions and prayers; after which he stands about waiting for 'general quarters' at 9.30, which lasts until about 10.40. Then, at eleven again, our man will be wanted for furling sails that were loosed at eight o'clock; this will keep him on deck till about 11.30. During

the dinner-hour he changes to the dress for the day, and being one of the watch in the afternoon, after he has been at his station assisting the boats to leave the ship for whatever may be ordered, he will be aloft most of the afternoon scraping masts and booms, or perhaps scrubbing deck-clothes and such common gear as is used for keeping the ship clean. The wash-clothes may be got down when the boats are away, and the evening is spent as usual, our man being in the watch from six to eight.

Saturday sees our man out at four stowing his hammock; then scrubbing, scrubbing, scrubbing till about ten o'clock; he has his breakfast at the usual time, but before that he has been at the upper decks. After it there is the gun-gear and the upper deck for him again, it being his watch on deck. At eleven the guns are polished till twenty minutes to twelve; but after dinner, when the ship is cleared up, our man, belonging to the 'watch below,' will probably be left to himself until four o'clock, when it becomes his watch. After the inspection, the sails are refurled—called 'mending the furl'—the yards are squared, and the decks cleared up as usual.

Sunday morning sees our man out at 4.30 to clean the ship, it being again his turn; in the watch below cleaning the mess falls to his lot this day. Divisions are at 9.30. Inspection of the ship and church; which being over about 11.15, nothing more is done. There are prayers after evening inspection, and then the ship is cleared up as on ordinary days: in some ships there is a voluntary evening service at seven. Our man on this Sunday having the six to eight watch may or may not have a boat to hoist up; otherwise his time is his own all day.

On the following week our man will sleep in until six on Monday and Wednesday, and he will be *on watch* exactly the reverse of the week we have followed him through. Should the ship have been at sea, the watch-keeping goes on through the night, the reliefs being at eight, midnight, and four. The men have no evolutions at eight and 5.20; are saved landing on Wednesday or Thursday and all boat-work; but besides the drills, inspections, cleanings, scrubbing, and washings we have detailed as performed in harbour, have to do all that is required in making, shortening, and furling sails, that wind, weather, and station-keeping in a squadron may require during day and night. Men that are under special instruction, excused for training, or going through the preliminary exercise for their rifle-firing, only clean the ship in their turns; from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. they are under the gunnery lieutenant. Every day directly after prayers the class commences drilling by itself, going on till 11.45, and commencing immediately after dinner and lasting till 4 P.M. Men belonging to boats have to go away when their boats are wanted, whether in their watch or watch below; but if belonging to the duty cutter, the boat most used, they are excused altogether all work of the ship. The captain's boat's crew is the only other so excused. At sea, with the exception of the class, no one is excused, and the class even keep night watch, but whether in harbour or at sea, from necessary causes, it will be found a man even when *excused* gets very little consecutive, and therefore good, instruction—half a day on Monday, a whole day on Tuesday and Wednesday, perhaps one hour on Thursday forenoon and Friday af-

ternoon, but no more—the only consecutive instruction being from Monday after dinner to Wednesday evening. Twelve hours' instruction in a week is the very outside, boat-work and all other teaching given up for it. The men who are not being specially taught get rifle instruction one hour a week; a man belonging to a boat and the ship in harbour will probably only have this once a fortnight. Sword instruction once a fortnight, gun-drill once a week, but with general quarters, which is not an instruction, and the quarterly firing at a target, a man gets somewhat more at his gun than at first appears.

Ordinary seamen and boys, whenever they are not at gunnery instruction, go to seamanship; but going from one thing to another, the classes are of the deadliest description, and never seem to advance; one sees and hears the same thing over and over again to the last day of the commission. At sea the classes continually have to break off, leaving gun, rifle, sword, and seamanship instructions to trim, make, or shorten sail; and this happens more particularly in a squadron. In harbour, if a boat has to be cleared it is tried to be done by the watch not at drill; a few men only come, too few to carry out man-of-war fashion, and hoist the things in properly. It must also be borne in mind how much refitting, coaling, &c., interferes with all regular teaching; that at sea, from bad weather, there is often none for days; and in harbour, if after or during the refitting *leave* is given to the men, weeks may elapse without any taking place. As the men pass out of their gunnery-drill, or become able seamen, they are exempted from further teaching; but we fear few pass out at the proper standard—the

temptation is too great, the standard gets lowered, and teachers point out the *number* they have brought to perfection. One thing often happens—the gunnery lieutenant continually finds men who manage to escape him; some men have been known to manage a whole commission and never belong to a single class; and we hold that these things show the perfunctory nature of the gunnery teaching in a ship while serving abroad or in a squadron, and that the time has come when naval barracks are a necessity, and also that every seaman in the service should be a seaman gunner, the teaching for which should take place in the barracks, leaving only small gunnery classes and seamanship to be taught afloat; classes to which, from their smallness, more care would be given, and, better still, leave time and opportunity for the all-important seamanship; for after all, it is on this one point the whole British navy hangs together.

We have shown in this account of the internal economy of her Majesty's ships, that the teaching going on for the naval service may be divided into two classes—the sailor and the gunner, and that the latter should be taught in England in fixed establishments, it being only possible to learn the former in a ship in commission at sea. To carry out this idea fully, we would advocate that the boys, as they leave the home training-ships, be sent to sea for two or three years; during that time to have but the slightest gunnery instruction, as very little would be sufficient to enable them to take their subordinate place in action; but on their return from foreign service they should go through the complete gunnery course, taking a year, and living in barracks on shore, the second time they go to sea going as 'seamen gunners.'

In this way the classes afloat that we deprecate would be avoided, and a man, instead of going from one thing to another, would have more time for work when work was to be done, and to himself when there was nothing to be done; for it must be remembered a man-of-war's man has not so many hours' work a day, like an artisan on shore; but, as we have shown, his day begins generally at four or half-past four in the morning, and goes on until nine at night; that at sea he is out of his hammock—though, perhaps, able to sleep on the deck—half every night;

and during the day he gets snatches of work, snatches of instruction, with snatches of time to himself; and in each and all of these he is liable to be broken in on. The internal economy of royal ships has bits added to it here and there; and we wish to see a fresh beginning made, believing that if what can only be well done in a ship in commission is done—all else being done under different circumstances—more zeal will be developed by officers and men, both in the shore establishments for gunnery and, last and best, in our ships afloat.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE:

A Reply to 'Women's Topp.'

I.

WHEN a chord in the harp is broken
It mars the harmonious strain;
But the master-hand can replace it,
And make it as perfect again.

II.

So Time, Life's master-spirit,
Can with skilful touch restore
The chord of love in a human heart,
Though recklessly snapt before.

III.

And when gentler hand shall prompt it
The old theme to renew,
In a flood of glorious music
False love shall be lost in the true.

F. E. A.

A PARISIAN MARRIAGE.

PART II.

AT THE CHURCH.

WHILE the carriage of the bride is on its way to the church, we will anticipate its arrival by some few minutes and observe what is going forward in the Place de l'Eglise, where from between ten and eleven o'clock the rumour of a grand wedding being about to take place has drawn together a crowd of spectators. Here are *marchands de nouveautés*, milliners, and *modistes* of both sexes, who have come to seek inspirations; some poor would-be *élégantes* eager to see the latest toilettes, and quite as large a preponderance of women as though it were the Place de la Roquette, and the scene an execution.

Messieurs the footmen in livery, all with their best calves on, converse among themselves of fashionable life, indicating that they know many things of which the general public are supremely ignorant. They cast a look of cold contempt upon the crowd, which has not, like them, the right of entry to the antechambers of the noble faubourg.

A considerable number of *invités* are already in the church awaiting the arrival of the bride, who has kept them; they think, in suspense quite long enough. At length her carriage draws up; the fat coachman and the footmen have bouquets adorned with favours in their buttonholes, and they all appear to have their opinion upon the marriage which is about to be solemnised.

'It is our turn to-day to marry

our demoiselle,' say they to the other servants. 'Ah, if it had been my demoiselle instead of monsieur's, she should have married some one else than that—a *panné*, without a sou to support his starving title!'

Meanwhile the bridal party have ascended the church-steps, and one hears the suisse's staff resounding on the sonorous pavement as the victims, assisted by their respective families, advance majestically up the great nave of the church, between a compact crowd, which rises, stands on tip-toe, and even mounts upon the chairs, the better to see the bride and bridegroom pass.

Every one is bedizened—glittering with stars and orders. It is as though the front of the shop in the Palais Royal, where all the constellations in the globe are displayed, is advancing. One cannot look at X., for instance, without blinking. Services rendered to four consecutive governments and to five foreign powers have produced this blaze of illumination. It must be admitted that he bears his crosses with becoming cheerfulness. Close by is Z., resplendent and only lately decorated. Despite the heat he wears a rich overcoat, in order to reproduce his decoration on it, and it is asserted that he even wears a ribbon in the buttonhole of his flannel under-vest. The stained-glass windows of the church, with the sun shining brilliantly through them, produce a singular effect, which some of the ladies ought to have seen

warned of. The Marquise d'A. looks as though she had the yellow jaundice; the Comtesse de B., who is naturally of a yellow tint, by the aid of that bright bit of cobalt is a rich sea-green; and as for the Duchesse de C., spite of all the pearl-powder she has laid on, her complexion is of the very fieriest red. Beside this group of ladies, beyond the range of the solar spectrum, however, is Madame de P., an ancient widow exceedingly anxious to get married again, and the green trimmings to whose *costume collant* say plainly enough that she has not yet lost hope; while on her right is the sempiternal Marquise de Q., in the most juvenile of *chapeaux* and the brightest of robes.

The moment the procession has passed a buzz of conversation ensues, and one overhears the following dialogue between two female friends of the family of the bride—Mesdames M. and N., mothers with daughters to marry, of course:

'Had you seen the bridegroom before?'

'Once, but in the evening; he seemed to me then much better than he really is.'

'That is just what I was about saying. The Leblancs have been praising him to me as a man young, slender, witty, and distinguished-looking. To hear them talk one would fancy him an Antinous.'

'Well, if he is an Antinous, he is dilapidated enough to be so.'

'Yes, he has crows'-feet already. Only in the evening of course they would not show so much. Slender and distinguished-looking too! That is to say, he is a skeleton; one sees that at a glance, in spite of all his padding. Perhaps, however, he is witty.'

'What, with a face like that, without animation, insipid-look-

ing, the profile of a sheep's head! It is hardly possible.'

'What would you expect? The Leblancs wanted a title. Well, they have secured one.'

'To think of sacrificing one's child, an only daughter too worth millions, merely to become parents of a Comtesse.'

'Ah, *mon Dieu*! Still, who can say that the little thing will be unhappy? Between ourselves, so far as mind goes, Clotilde is not particularly strong; though she is rattlesome enough, it is certain that she cannot be compared to your Mathilde or to my Alice.'

'Quite true, my dear; you cannot imagine the good sense and reasoning Mathilde displays for her age. It was only yesterday she said to me—I ought not, perhaps, to repeat it to you, I, her mother, because it looks as if I were extolling her—she said, "Ah, well! I never would have been guilty of such an act of stupidity as Clotilde. To marry a title, indeed! What I want is a husband who is very rich; because you know, mamma, I am accustomed to our style of living, and I should not like to have to drop down to anything different."'

'What thorough good sense! It is just like my Alice. The child's judgment is astonishing. She—who is that *chapeau toit de chaume* looking towards us—to the right—with a glass on her nose?'

'That is the Baronne de Cerfeuil. O my dear, do not speak of her; it would be improper. I have heard dreadful things about the woman.'

'What? What have you heard? Tell me in a whisper, so that the little ones may not hear.'

Madame M. whispers in Madame N.'s ear.

'Impossible! Well, I never!'

'She is not at all young, but

well plastered and painted. However, one need not be surprised at that; it is generally the case with rickety articles.'

To return, however, to the bridal pair. Clotilde, according to her own account, was enchanted with everything. As the great organ pealed forth a triumphal march, she observed, she said, hundreds of smiling faces turned towards her; and at the other end of the church, in an ideal framework of sunshine, incense, velvet, and gold, caught sight of the two gilt armchairs in which she and Gontran had to sit before the *bon Dieu*.

'I do not know,' writes she, 'why an old engraving which is in my father's cabinet came at that moment into my mind. This engraving represents the entry of Alexander into Babylon; he is riding upon an elephant glittering with precious stones. I felt like he must have felt; only you know Alexander was a pagan, and had many crimes to reproach himself with, whilst I was pure. O, I felt that; I should not have enjoyed it so deliciously without; and besides, I had confessed myself the day before. The *bon Dieu* smiled upon me, and with His paternal hand motioned me to sit in His house, upon His crimson carpet, in His gilt armchair. The spheres, moved with joy, played music to me; and above, from the dazzling stained-glass windows, the archangels, full of goodwill, smiled as they looked down on my innocence. As I passed up the church, the heads bowed before me as a field of corn before the wind. Friends, relations, acquaintances, enemies, all inclined themselves; and I saw—for one sees everything despite oneself on these solemn occasions—that they found nothing to object to in me. Arrived at the gilt armchair, I

bent with restrained precipitation over the *prie-dieu*, and I uttered a short prayer. The organ ceased its song of triumph, and I could hear poor mamma bursting into tears beside me. O, I can understand what a mother's heart must feel at such a ceremony! Whilst regarding with perfect self-possession the clergy, advancing in the midst of all their sacerdotal pomp, I noticed Gontran, who seemed irritated; he was straight, stiff, his nostrils dilated, and his lips compressed. I have always felt a little angry with him for not being more sensitive to what was happening to me on that day; still men rarely realise the poetry of existence.'

Whilst all this is passing through Clotilde's mind, some of the distinguished female friends of the bridegroom—young women, and women called young—are interchanging remarks upon her.

'Well, what is your opinion of the bride?'

'Why, to tell truth, I really did not expect to find her so good-looking.'

'She is certainly seen to advantage to-day. And yet I don't know who could have made her a toilette in such bad taste.'

'It is all white *faille*, I believe!'

'*Faille, faille*—there is nothing commoner now. And then those ruches, they are put on fully the eighth of an inch too high. She is dressed like a perfect fright.'

'But, Baroness, is Gontran really in love with her?'

'Gontran! Who is he?'

'You know perfectly well, my dear—the bridegroom, of course' (smiling); 'and so you have really forgotten his Christian name?'

The Baroness de Cerfeuil, perfectly impassible, contents herself with replying that M. de Vieux-Castel has not made her his confidante.

'Altogether,' observes the Marchioness, 'for a little *parvenue*, this future Comtesse is really not amiss.'

'O, certainly, for those who are partial to weeping willows. Thin, with nothing but her hair, which she certainly makes the most of. But look there, my dear; there are bundles enough beside the bride.'

'There are, indeed; still what can one expect! Distinction is not to be bought otherwise; some of these people would be only too happy to invest a little of their ready cash in it. Do you know the fortune of these Lenoirs, Leroux, or whatever their name is?'

'Leblanc, you mean. It is impossible for one to know very exactly anything about these sort of people, who dabble in such things as sugar, colza, petroleum, and guano. One can never be certain of the amount of their incomes.'

'At any rate, there is a very fine dowry for the present, and I am enchanted on Gontran's account, for he is a charming fellow. You, too, are pleased, are you not, Baroness?'

'Certainly; and I am remarkably curious to hear all the virtues with which Monseigneur will endow him in his little discourse.'

MONSEIGNEUR'S DISCOURSE—THE CEREMONY.

MONSEIGNEUR addresses to the happy pair a warm allocution full of agreeable personalities, which are particularly grateful to them, as of course on this occasion they and all connected with them are necessarily paragons of virtue. This species of discourse is usually a kind of stereotype, varied according to circumstances; and the panegyric is addressed to the bride and bridegroom in order to tem-

per the acrimony of the duties of man and wife, which will be taught them during the Mass, when the officiating priest will dryly establish the debit and credit account of the house of business which is being established under his auspices. Monseigneur set forth that the wife owes obedience to her husband, which is sufficient—for the moment it is essential that he leads her to the altar; later she will undertake to lead him. The bride, in her reminiscences of the ceremony, describes Monseigneur's discourse as a most admirable one.

'It was pronounced,' she remarks, 'with all that unction, that dignity, and that persuasive charm which he is universally admitted to possess. He spoke of our two families "in which pious belief is, like honour, hereditary." One might have heard a pin fall; every one listened to the words of the reverend prelate with such attention. Then he turned towards me, and made me comprehend, with a thousand delicate allusions, that I was united to one of the most ancient and honourable families, and one of the noblest officers in the French army. "Heaven smiles," said he, "upon the Christian warrior who places his sword at his country's service, and, when he throws himself into the thick of the fight, can lay his hand upon his heart and shout this noblest of all war-cries, "I believe!"' How all this was said! Such grandeur in this sacred eloquence, causing a quiver to run through the entire congregation. But this was not all. Monseigneur then addressed himself to Gontran, and, with a voice soft and insinuating as it had just been vibrating and enthusiastic, said to him:

"Monsieur, you are about to take as your companion a young

girl" (I scarcely dare recall all the graceful and delicate things Monseigneur said when speaking of me) "holily brought up by a Christian mother, who has shared with her, if I may say it, all the virtues of her heart, all the charms of her mind." (Mamma commenced to sob.) "She will love her husband as she has loved her father, who from her cradle has cultivated in her those sentiments of nobility of soul and pure disinterestedness which" (papa smiled, in spite of himself) "animate this father, whose name is a household word among the poor, and whose place in the temple of prayer is on the bench of the elect" (papa is churchwarden). "And you, monsieur, I feel assured, will respect, as it deserves, so much purity combined with such ineffable candour" (I felt my eyes fill with tears). "And without disregarding the perishable physical charms of the angel who is this day confided to you, you will thank Heaven for qualities a hundredfold more precious and more durable with which she is so liberally endowed."

'I could restrain myself no longer, and burst into tears. Never had our holy religion appeared nobler, grander, or more persuasive to my view. Whilst Monseigneur was pronouncing these last words, a ray of sunlight fell upon his venerable forehead. I saw him thus through my tears. He was no longer a man, but an angel, though rather advanced in years, it must be confessed.

'We were now made to rise and stand opposite to each other, like the divine spouses in Raffaele's picture, when we exchanged the gold ring, and Monseigneur said, in a grave slow voice, some Latin words, the sense of which I did not understand, but which moved me infinitely; for the prelate's

hand, white, delicate, and transparent, seemed to be blessing me. The censers, with their bluish smoke, swung by infantile hands, spread through the air I know not what pious perfume. What a delicious day it seemed for me! All that next passed is confused in my memory. I was dazzled, carried away. I remember one thing, however—the bonnet with white roses with which Louise had bedecked herself. How strange it is that some people have not the slightest taste!

Meanwhile the organ resumes its rights, pealing forth the music of *Don Giovanni*—fashionable music arranged for these particular occasions. One recognises the lamentations of the abandoned Elvira, the cries of rage of Donna Anna, and the grumbling of Mazetto the husband. One, however, ought only to see in this the good intentions of the organist, which were no doubt creditable enough at bottom. At the elevation of the Host the trio of the masks is played, and every one bows his head, with the exception of some few whom the stiffness of a too-well-starched collar prevents from properly humiliating themselves.

But the women are most edifying. How ardently the little De M. prays the *bon Dieu* to preserve her friend's good husband and give a similar one to herself! 'I shall sell myself at a high price, like he has done,' remarks handsome P. to his friend Q. As to Madame S., she bends to the very ground—one must add that she is extremely short-sighted—and eagerly seizes the opportunity to examine closely the trimming of the robe of the lady in front of her, which she thus notes in detail without running the risk of being accused of indiscreet curiosity. At the end of the *Salutaria*

Hostia, to the air of *Batti, batti*, Madame S. has calculated to a nicety how much both the robe and trimming have cost. One observes a curious little manœuvre between a couple of opposite sexes, who evidently knew each other, for their eyes betrayed them. They had recourse to the electric telegraph—in this instance a prayer-book, which is held open or shut, according to the sentiments of the owner: if open, it indicates that the door of the heart will not be closed to the appeals of love—the thing is very simple.

At a wedding, people generally whisper and sneer quite as much as they do at a funeral, and even the young girls present cannot refrain from following the example set them by their elders.

'Alice dear,' remarks one, 'Clotilde looks pale, does she not?'

'Well, yes; but this kind of thing has of course a certain effect upon one. Besides, you know white is very trying to the complexion.'

'Would you believe, pet, that bound up together as Clotilde and I am, I was one of the last to be informed of her marriage? One would not have stolen her Gontran from her, however; he is not good-looking enough for that. What is your opinion of him?'

'He would not be amiss if he had less beard.'

'Isn't it frightful, that forest he has on his face? Whereabouts would one have to kiss a man with so much hair as that?'

'I am sure I don't know,' replies Alice, laughing in her prayer-book; 'I have never kissed a man with a beard.'

'Ah, I understand; your cousin Hyacinthe only has moustaches.'

Alice, nudging her friend with her elbow, begs her to be quiet,

as mamma is behind and will hear what she is saying; whereupon the conversation takes another turn, the friend remarking,

'Only think! It is Julie who collects; quite an event, too—for a wonder she is not in her green dress.'

'She dragged it enough in all the *salons* this season. Who is with her?'

'I don't know him. He doesn't seem particularly amused, does he?'

'With Julie on his arm, that is not astonishing.'

'How wicked you are!'

'Not at all, my little pet lamb; in proof of which I am going to show you a handsome man.'

'Where, where?'

'To the right—in almost the same line as ourselves, on the other side.'

'I can't see him.'

'Near the fifth pillar—tall and dark; he is twirling his moustache. But don't stare like that, he will see you.'

'Ah, I see him—tall and decorated. He must be an officer.'

'Would you marry an officer?'

'If he were a general I would.'

'But the generals are all old.'

'It seems they are going to change all that. Papa said the other day that the Government intended to have only young generals. Then you understand I would marry one who was very rich, and Clotilde could not give herself airs about her Gontran.'

'That's true; she does not look so, but at bottom I know she must be very proud.'

IN THE SACRISTY.

THE *Ite missa est* has been pronounced. Great tumult ensues as the bride passes under the cross-fire of all these merciless looks. The poor thing blushes in presence

of so much unrestrained curiosity, blushes and looks down on the ground. Still she has in reality more assurance than her husband, the bearded ex-Zouave. And so she need, for she has to run the gauntlet of hostile criticism, not only from her own but the opposite sex, conceited young *gommeux* of the noble faubourg, friends of the bridegroom; one of whom asks in our hearing,

'Well, children, what do you think of the bride?'

'Faugh! insignificant face; branches enough about her, but no trunk.'

'That's true; she is very thin, but then she is well stuffed. Her wedding dress is lined with bank-notes. It seems old Leblanc has a heap of money-bags.'

'She ought to have worn some about her, it would have improved her figure.'

'Don't laugh like that, René; you forget you are inside a church.'

'You surely don't expect me to cry, Gaston! It is not I who have just been married.'

A perfect *queue* is formed at the door of the sacristy. Hats for which there is no longer any room are borne aloft on the ends of sticks and umbrellas, reminding one of the scarecrows gardeners place in their vegetable beds. The relations of both parties are seen in a row at the end of the sacristy with the happy couple, separated from the crowd of *invités* by a kind of wooden barrier, which serves to restrain the invading effusion of friends, who cannot always contain themselves under such solemn circumstances. Every one pushes, elbows, shakes hands, crushes, and kisses. Mesdames M. and N. manage to advance up to Madame Leblanc, saying,

'Dear friend, we feel so happy. In presence of happiness such as

this, mothers are made to understand each other. Your son-in-law is charming; and as for Clotilde, she is a perfect angel.' (They all embrace.) 'What happiness is in store for them!'

As they retire, Madame M. remarks to Madame N., 'You mark my words; there will be a separation before a couple of years are over.'

The Marchioness congratulates the bridegroom,

'Ah, Count, you do not deserve such a jewel as Madame.'

Which said, they shake hands with *empressement*. Alice and her friend offer their congratulations to the bride:

'Let us kiss you, dearest, as we love you much, very much.'

The kissings over, Alice whispers in the bride's ear,

'Your husband is simply ravishing.'

A moment afterwards, as she and her friend are retiring, she observes to the latter,

'What a simpleton he looks! He never said a word to us.'

The Baroness de Cerfueil now advances:

'M. de Vieux-Castel, I wish you all the happiness you deserve.'

They bow to each other, and the Baroness beats a retreat.

Gaston and René next present themselves, saying to the bridegroom,

'Gontran, we have to offer you our sincerest congratulations; and to the bride, 'Madame, we venture to repeat the same to you. We are too much the friends of Gontran to say all the good of him that we think.'

Shakings of hands and bowings follow this pretty speech. When they are out of hearing Gaston remarks to René,

'She is rather stupid, is she not?'

To which René replies, 'A per-

feet goose.' Then addressing a friend, he asks his opinion.

'Well, judging from what is going on,' rejoins the latter, 'I should say that the place where people kiss the most is in a sacristy.'

The *petit cher*, who was not invited, thinks it necessary to offer his congratulations; but when, radiant with smiles, he approaches the bridegroom, he finds a wooden face in front of him. No matter, every one has seen him in the sacristy, and knows now that he is a man of position. At this moment one overhears a lady on one's right inviting another to come and have some pigeon-shooting.

'I prefer the pistol,' replies her friend. 'At twenty paces I can match the Princess de D.'

One pities with all one's heart the parents of the bride; this continual smile of an hour and a half, which they are forced to preserve, must certainly have the effect of increasing the crows'-feet of Madame Mère, already beginning to develop themselves. She is thinking of this, you may be sure.

And what are the bride's thoughts at the moment when every one is pushing and pressing around her, and she answers all their smiles and compliments with a little salute, in which she desires religious emotion should be apparent?

'I was conscious,' said she, 'that something solemn had taken place,

and that I had just bound myself in eternal bonds. I was really married. Then, by a singular train of thought, my mind reverted to the piteous little marriage of the day before. I compared the retired dealer in spring-mattresses and iron-bedsteads, all embarrassed as he was in his black coat, to Monseigneur in his gorgeous alb and stole; the commonplace and trivial phraseology of Monsieur le Maire with the eloquent outbursts of the venerable prelate. What a contrast! Here, the world; there, heaven! Here, the coarse prose of the counting-house; there, celestial poetry!

'Gontran, to whom I afterwards spoke on the subject, said to me,

"But, *chère amie*, you do not, perhaps, know that at the Mairie the marriage is performed gratis, whilst at the church it costs—"

'I put my hand before his mouth. I was unwilling he should utter any such impiety. Gratis, indeed! That is precisely what I find so unbecoming in the affair.'

It is unnecessary to describe the wedding-dinner. Only the more distant relations and friends profit by this.

'Is her fortune solid?' thinks the bridegroom's maiden aunt, while accepting some iced pudding.

'Will he make her happy?' asks the bride's mother of herself, weeping into her champagne-glass.

'I shall be heartily glad when it's all over,' sighs the husband, gazing into his wife's eyes.

MY LOVE AND I.

I.

A GLIST'NING river 'neath a morning's sky ;
Gently we're gliding down, my love and I.
The oars lie idle as we float along ;
Softly I sing, and this my tender song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

II.

The banks shine green, a willow's bough hangs low,
A swallow skims across, a black-winged crow
Caws loud, and wakes a soft-voiced distant throng
Of warblers sweet, to join with me in song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

III.

The sun mounts higher in the cloudless sky,
Still we float on, my gentle love and I.
A rustling wind the slender reeds among
Bends their light forms and mingles with my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

IV.

The noontide changes to the golden gleam
Of parting daylight, and the rippling stream
Shines with a wondrous radiance. All along
The dark'ning bank's echo flings back my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

V.

The mists are gath'ring now, the rose-red light has fled ;
A mournful bird trills low that day is dead ;
The flowers hang limp and brown, and shadows long
Creep through the sombre pines ; yet still my song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

VI.

In tears and dimness on the banks we part ;
Night hides the shining stream ; time stills the heart ;
Only its chords vibrating yet prolong
The soft sad cadence of my tender song,
' O lady, life is short, and love is strong !'

C. L. P.

MY SWIM TO THE TARGET.

A Story of Shoeburyness.

BY AN ARTILLERY OFFICER.

Few, perhaps, among the civilian population of England have any very certain idea as to the whereabouts of Shoeburyness; fewer still, perhaps, have been there. To travel down from Fenchurch-street to the extreme end of the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway is of itself a journey not to be undertaken without some definite object in view; and when to this is added a tramp of some two miles along yielding sand and shingle, or, as an alternative, about four miles of uninteresting road, it is easy to understand that few tourists are to be found energetic enough to travel so far merely to see the place and return; for stay there they cannot, there being no hotel of any description in the little place.

Shoeburyness then, for the benefit of the uninitiated, may be defined as a 'little noisy place near Southend.' As to its physical characteristics, it is a heterogeneous collection of barracks, batteries, and sandbanks. To the stranger approaching it, it presents a most uninviting aspect, especially should the tide happen to be out. For then becomes apparent the interminable reaches of sand that stretch away out to sea for miles in their unvarying and dreary flatness, broken only here and there by the black form of a target or by the pegs driven into the yielding soil to mark the ranges. Nevertheless it is to this very dismal expanse that Shoeburyness owes its importance in

military eyes, and which makes it what it is—the great experimental and practice station for the British artillery.

Everything is quiet enough there till eight o'clock or thereabouts. Then the observer sees here and there a flag run up on the summit of a battery or casemate, and the roar of the guns begins and lasts for two or three hours, almost without intermission. Looking out to sea one may perceive clouds of smoke rolling away, far up in the blue sky, like white balls, as the shells burst in the distance, and may hear the noise of the report floating lazily back after an apparently interminable lapse of time. When it is remembered that of the thousands of fuses of all kinds turned out of the Woolwich Arsenal some three per cent have to be proved by actual experiment, one may form some conception of the appearance of Shoeburyness on a busy day.

Enough, however, of description for the present. Even to this remote corner of England has enterprise penetrated, and when last I was there the foundation of a great hotel was being laid. Soon, no doubt, it will be as great a resource for the ubiquitous 'Arry as other portions of her Majesty's dominions. I should not have ventured to intrude it upon my readers but for an adventure which happened to me there on one occasion, and which went very near to depriving the British public of this interesting recital

and the Royal Regiment of Artillery of the services of a 'most promising young officer,' as no doubt the *Times* would have recorded.

In the year 187— I was going through what is technically known as the 'long course,' a curriculum of instruction in gunnery theoretical and practical; the former at Woolwich, and the latter at Shoeburyness—each part lasting six months. We had been enjoying ourselves at our seaside residence for three out of these six months exceedingly; for we had been fortunate enough to have gone there in the summer months; and between boating and bathing and playing lawn-tennis, in a modified form known as 'sticky,' in courts constructed out of the boards of old targets past work, the time had passed very pleasantly. It was now August, and a very hot one; the sun burned in the heavens like a red coal, and scorched up the scanty water that the sand-beds contained, till we had to send miles away to fetch what was required for the use of the barracks. Work of any kind was an effort. One felt inclined to spend the day swimming lazily about, or sitting on a warm rock after the fashion of Tennyson's merman. It was one of these aquatic excursions which got me into the greatest scrape I have ever been in, or that I ever shall be in, I hope, as the sensation was anything but pleasant.

I must premise that I was a very fair swimmer, having learned that art, amongst many other useful things, at the Academy, and progressed favourably in it during a course of seaside fort residences. My great ambition had always been to swim round the 2000* target some day when the tide was in, and at length I determined to make the attempt. The

feat seems easy enough, no doubt, but I was no Captain Webb; and amongst my fellow-officers there were few who would have attempted it, so I felt rather inclined to be able to say that I had been there. Confiding my intention to no one, I started one day from the gun-pier just before slack water, counting on getting back before the tide turned again.

It was a hot day, as I have before said, and I swam very slowly; however, I arrived at my destination without much difficulty. The framework on which the target floated offered a pleasant resting-place, and I lay down on it lazily, intending to take some five minutes' breathing-time, and then strike out for home. But alas for the feebleness of human resolutions! Between the warm sun and the long swim and the recumbent posture, I had not been there two minutes before I was fast asleep. I had a curious dream. I had been reading a rather wild book of speculative astronomy that morning, and had been somewhat struck by the writer's theory that the end of the world would come through the fiery vapours and lava of the interior of the earth breaking through the thin crust thereof. I dreamed now that such a catastrophe was imminent, and that I was calmly inspecting a pressure-gauge to ascertain how long the globe would yet endure. Higher and higher ran the warning hand upon the dial, and at length, with a mighty crash, the world exploded, and I was hurled, not into chaos, but into the water of the estuary of the Thames!

Thoroughly awakened, as the reader may suppose, I rose to the surface, gulping down a mouthful of water swallowed in the surprise. As I clutched the framework beside me, I was conscious

of a dazzling red flash like sheet-lightning, followed by a tremendous report and a rattling all about me, as though a shower of hail were falling. I had seen too much of artillery not to know what this astonishing meteor was—a shrapnel shell.

Perhaps there may be some of my readers ignorant of what such a missile is; for, indeed, it is of somewhat late invention. Let them imagine, then, a cylindrical shell of iron, ogival-headed, and containing as many bullets as it will conveniently hold, comfortably set in a bed of rosin. At the bottom thereof is a small charge of powder, ignited by a time-fuze bored to burn any required time. On this delightful machine exploding out fly the bullets, and, by the inexorable laws of dynamics, partaking of the original motion of the shell, cover the ground before them for hundreds of yards with a *feu d'enfer*, as of a whole regiment firing volleys.

Such an implement of destruction is very well to talk about; but when its violence is directed against oneself, there is less pleasure in the contemplation. Clearly I had slept so long that the ordinary afternoon practice had begun, and from two guns evidently, or the one shot could not have followed the other so rapidly. Only a few seconds had I for these thoughts ere I saw a red flash leap out from the flag-crowned battery on shore. Instantly I dived deep as I could, and heard, deadened by the water above me, the sharp report of the shell. As I rose to the surface again, I saw white splinters on the woodwork of the target, that showed how true the aim had been. Scarcely had I time to take breath when the red flash leaped again, and again I dived. They were good gun detachments—none better any-

where; and the guns were light ones—16-pounders. Often had I competed myself in a race with time, running the gun up again almost before the recoil had ceased, and ramming home shot and cartridge ere it had reached its former position again. Now no doubt my comrades were hard at work, wondering, perhaps, what had become of me.

Eight separate times had I dived, and my strength was failing fast. Even now there was a ringing noise in my head which almost stupefied me, and was growing more painful every instant. If I stood up on the framework and tried to signal to the shore, I must stand at least one shot, and that was almost certain death.

Even in that desperate moment an absurd idea came into my head, as such things will come sometimes. I had read somewhere of an ingenious recipe for finding a safe place on ship-board in action by putting one's head out at a hole where a shot had come in, relying on the improbability of another entering at the same orifice. There was one corner of the framework splintered by several bullets; to it I crept, and held on despairingly.

Another flash from the battery. This time I could see the shell coming like a black speck in the sky. Anxiously I watched for the burst to come; but this time it came not, and the shell plunged into the sea fifty yards short, throwing up a mighty pillar of water, and ricochetting away far over my head. Was the fuze blind? I asked myself. No; there was another flash and another rush through the air, and sullen plunge in the sea beyond the target. The shrapnel practice was over, and they were firing plugged shell.

Now or never was my time. I

climbed on to the woodwork, sprang to my feet, and waved my hands. From the shore I must have looked very like a picture of Andromeda chained to her rock. I was too late, however, to escape a shot. Once more the red flash spouted forth, and I heard the ominous rush coming nearer and nearer, till with a roar as of an express train it rushed past my head, carrying away with it the left-hand top corner of the target, and hurling it far into the sea beyond. The concussion seemed to tear my feet from under me, and I fell, striking my head against the framework. I had just sense enough left to prevent myself rolling into the sea. My last glance at the shore showed the flag hoisted half-mast high; and then I must have fainted away, for I remember no more till I found myself lying in my bed,

with the surgeon-major applying strong ammonia to my nostrils with marvellous effect. I have little more to tell. Watching the effect of the shot from the battery, they had seen me standing there, just too late to stop the gun being fired; had ceased the practice, and got a boat out without delay, though with a very faint hope of finding me alive. Of course the story was made a standing joke against me ever after, and I must own that I deserved it. Nevertheless, I have at least the satisfaction of considering that when we go forth again to fight the Russians or the Germans, or whatever other nation may elect to try with us a game of war on a large scale, I am never likely to be much nearer

'The straight and dreadful pass of death' than I was that day on the sands of Shoeburyness.

ANSWER TO THE SPECIAL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (No. XVI.)

1. R O M A N T I C I Z E R
2. I R E N E
3. G L O S S O P
4. H A L L O W E L L
5. T I N E Y

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. 1 Chron. xxv. 4, 31. 2. Dr. Johnson's play, and its heroine. 3. Lord Howard of Glossop. 4. Present to Lord Nelson. 5. Cowper's hare Tinny: see Epitaph, &c.

Correct solutions to the above have been received from ARABA, C O M, and KANITBEKO, who thus become the winners of the three prizes, the total sum of which, 40l., will be divided equally amongst them.

Will these three successful solvers send their names and addresses, for publication in the next number of *London Society*, to the Acrostic Editor, 188 Fleet-street, E.C., so that cheques may be forwarded to them?

Bon Gualtier, Mungo-Puss-Tory, and Shahtan failed in the last light only. Bon Gualtier gave 'Townley,' Mungo-Puss-Tory gave 'Toby,' and Shahtan gave 'Trelawney,' instead of 'Tinny.'

The Acrostics will for the present be discontinued in *London Society*; and their renewal at some future time, or a representation of the Sphinx in another phase, will greatly depend upon whether the taste for such things which prevails now will be of a lasting or of an ephemeral character.

